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1st Series. No. 264.

ROMANISM.

By S. G. BULFINCH.

PRINTED FOR THE

American Unitarian Association.

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THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH.

The Roman Catholic Church has of late years attracted strongly the attention of Protestant observers. That attention has, with many, been blended with fear, lest a system which they regarded as greatly erroneous should acquire unrestrained ascendency. The hopes of others have been excited, that the mighty frame, which had stood for so many centuries, was about to be destroyed. There seemed enough, indeed, in the recent history of the papal Church, to give occasion for all these fears, or all these hopes, according as the mind of the observer was disposed to contemplate the dark or the bright side of the object before him.

There has been much to excite fear. The progress of the Roman Catholics in our own country has been great. Tens of thousands of immigrants, annually arriving from Ireland, have brought with them a devoted attachment to that religious system, which they have considered as identified with the cause of their country. They have come generally in poverty, and in that ignorance which gave little hope of their attaining more than poverty here. Yet, as they have spread themselves over our western regions, or

remained crowded in our eastern cities, churches have risen for the ceremonies of their ancient worship, rivalling in splendor those erected by Protestant wealth and zeal. Colleges and nunneries have been established in every section of the country. The Jesuits, that class of priests devoted in all things to the service of Rome, and equally distinguished in past ages for their learning, their zeal, and their intriguing spirit, — the Jesuits, banished even by Catholic nations in Europe, are among us, wearing their formidable name without disguise, and exercising unquestioned all the rights of American citizens. Nor is it in our own country alone that we see marks of renewed vigor in the papal Church. The present head of that church, Pope Pius IX., has manifested, since his accession, the profound policy of his dynasty, in accommodating itself in all things, except doctrine, to the spirit of the age. His personal virtues, too, have given new dignity to his ancient throne; and though while we write he is an exile from the papal city, the treatment he has received from its inhabitants has endeared him the more to his spiritual subjects elsewhere, and his speedy restoration now hardly admits a doubt. In England, meantime, a reaction in favor of Romanism has commenced and made no slight progress. Ecclesiastics of the national Church have relinquished her orders, to be received into those of the papal communion; and among many who remain, the tendency seems to be, as in the evil days of Laud, to avoid the supposed dangers of dissent by approximating as nearly as possible to Rome.

But to counterbalance these, other facts present themselves to our view. The Romish Church in our country loses adherents constantly, by the gradual transfusion of the immigrants and their children into the mass of a community which is still generally Protestant. In Europe, the

reformation in which Ronge and Czerski took the lead, has deprived Catholicism of many adherents, and is of still more importance as a sign of the inquiring spirit of the age. Nations among those most thoroughly Catholic have banished the Jesuits, and abolished the convents or placed them under new restrictions. Finally, the Pope himself has been deprived of his temporal power, and his restoration will not destroy the significance of the event, nor prevent its recurrence. Education and intelligence are spreading everywhere; arbitrary governments are assuming constitutional forms; they who believe that the spirit of the Romish Church is opposed to intelligence and liberty cannot but discern, in the increase of these, at once indications and means of the decline of the papal power.

In these circumstances of the Roman Catholic Church, it becomes a question of importance to us how that great institution should be viewed. Some of us have occasion to associate with Catholics on terms of equality; they furnish a great part of the domestics in our families and of the laborers in our employ. Their convents and schools in some places offer to aid in the education of our children. Their colleges seek from our legislatures the chartered sanction of the law. Are we to fear or to trust them? — to shun or to meet their arguments? — by what means and to what extent to attempt their conversion, or to guard against our own? We should learn how to conduct towards them, whether they appear among us in the character of immigrants or of citizens, — as a migratory laboring class, as neighbours and associates, or as educational and spiritual guides.

Let us, in the first place, try to take a correct view of the Roman Catholic Church itself, granting to it that justice which it has a right to claim, but not becoming voluntarily

blind to what is objectionable in it. We are not bound, in virtue of our Protestant principles, to repeat or to believe all that has been said against the Church of Rome in the controversies of three hundred years. Time has softened, or should soften, the feelings of disputants; and we, looking back on past ages from the elevation and with the light of the nineteenth century, are at liberty to point out the errors and exaggerations even of those who yet, in our opinion, were nearest to the truth.

We are not, then, compelled to regard the Romish Church, either in past ages or at present, as an institution consciously and intentionally fraudulent in its character. It cannot be doubted that there are now, and have been in every age of its existence, thousands of sincere believers in its claims. Nor have these been only among the laity, deceived by the arts of priestcraft. Priests, also, bishops and popes, have been as conscientious in upholding their ecclesiastical system as ever was Protestant in attacking it. This has probably always been the case with the majority of the Church. The long succession of Roman pontiffs, who as a body have effected so stupendous a usurpation over mankind, have yet been in most instances individually aiming to perform what they supposed the proper duty of their office. Their usurpation was gradual, and thus scarcely perceptible as such even to themselves. The early Christian ministers of Rome had no thought, when accepting, for the Church, the rich bequests of sincere piety, that they were taking the first steps towards empire. Zachary and Stephen, when they sanctioned the revolution which raised Pepin to the throne of France, — Leo III., when he placed the imperial crown on the head of Charlemagne, — pursued, undoubtedly, a politic course; but the occasions on which they acted were not of their creation, nor could these popes contem-

plate the use which their successors would make of these precedents to sustain claims of universal dominion. In their age such claims would have been ridiculous. The papacy grew to its height of influence by other means, united with its own ambition. The rude princes of Europe felt the need of an arbiter, and acknowledged one in the bishop of the imperial city. Religious controversialists appealed to the same tribunal, and magnified the authority of the pontiffs who decided in their favor. Even the most usurping of the popes, Gregory VII., was magnanimous and far-seeing in his ambition. To purify the Church he ruled, — to unite all its monarchies beneath a sway which would preserve peace and order among them all, — to make of Christendom one vast confederacy, and turn the united force of its arms against the threatening power of the Saracens, — these were designs which, in that dark age, could be formed by none but a master mind; nor do we believe that the stern old man stooped to hypocrisy in his last words, — "I have loved righteousness and hated iniquity, therefore I die in exile."

Neither was the authority which these pontiffs attained altogether evil in its results; nor, if we prefer Congregational usage now, are we compelled to assert that our system would have been practicable in the Middle Ages. It may be that the proud barons and fierce kings of that period needed an authority as lofty as their own to restrain them. It was over these that the Romish Church chiefly exercised the sternness of its power. To the people it was gentle, defending them from oppression, sharing with them its privileges and its honors, and exerting its influence for their gradual emancipation.* Alexander III. was justly re-

* See some interesting remarks upon this subject in the first chapter of Macaulay's History of England.

garded by the Italian republics as their great defender. They gave his name to the city* which they built, as a monument and a bulwark of their deliverance from the German rule. We must not think so slightly of Divine Providence, as to believe that it was without some wise purpose that this vast authority was permitted so long to occupy its singular and commanding station in the centre of Christendom.

Nor, if we admit the great depravity of morals, and the persecuting spirit, by which the Church of Rome was marked at the period of the Reformation, are we to close our eyes to the improvement which subsequent ages have wrought there as elsewhere. In some respects, the very necessity of self-protection wrought a change. It would have been madness, after men had once begun to think for themselves, for cardinals or cabinets to have placed upon the papal throne a soldier like Julius II., or a shameless tyrant like Alexander VI. And if the brand of intolerance still adhered to the Church, if pernicious doctrines of false morality found favor with it, in the days of its great struggle for its lost supremacy, let us not believe, against evidence, that it has failed to share the humanizing influence of modern civilization. It has not been till our own age that even Protestants have understood and consistently followed out the principle of the right of private judgment, — if, indeed, it can be asserted that this even yet is fully the case. In former ages the Catholic Church was not alone intolerant. Romanists, Baptists, and Arians were burnt in Protestant England. Sectaries were banished, and Quakers hung, in Massachusetts. Even Unitarian Transylvania is responsible for the imprisonment of Francis David. The similar crimes of the Catholic Church were greater, for its power was

* Alessandria.

greater. But those days have past. Even Spain would not now endure an *auto-da-fe.*

If, however, we must in justice concede to the Catholic Church, that its members have shared in the march of civilization, we have yet to remember that in this progress they have not led, but followed. It is in Protestant communities that the great ideas of modern advancement have been first enunciated; and their diffusion among Catholics has been rather in opposition to the spirit of their religion than by its aid. The position of the Romish Church has been conservative, slowly and unwillingly yielding to the spirit of improvement. Yet its conservatism in the nineteenth century should not be confounded with the war which it waged against progress, with all the weapons of violence and of fraud, in the days of Mary Tudor and of Ignatius Loyola.

Again, it is not Christian justice to apply indiscriminately to the Church of Rome those portions of Holy Writ which Protestant controversialists have been accustomed to interpret as prophetical of its enormities. That some passages may be correctly thus applied we will not deny. Where St. Paul speaks of those who should "depart from the faith," as "forbidding to marry and commanding to abstain from meats,"* we recognize doctrines which are among the peculiarities of the Church of Rome; but whether the "spirit" which foretold this departure had reference to that Church or to the earlier error of the Encratites, is a question by no means easy to decide. The prophetic warning is applied to the false doctrine, by whatever branch of the Church it may have been or may yet be held; and we may lawfully thus apply it, without using it as especially directed against any one denomination. The passage in 2 Thess. ii., where St. Paul describes the Man of Sin, and

* 1 Timothy iv. 1 – 3.

the account of Babylon the Great, in Revelations, are understood by many of the ablest critics as having reference to transactions much earlier than the rise of the papal power.

The last position which we would lay down, in necessary justice to the Roman Catholics, is, that the belief of the ignorant members of that Church should not be taken as an expression of its actual doctrines. Every denomination has a right to claim that its doctrines should be understood by its opponents according to the account of them given by its ablest members. It may be that the ignorant Catholic actually addresses divine worship to the saints: his Church teaches him only to implore their prayers, as he would those of a human friend. He may conceive that the forgiveness of the priest alone cleanses him from sin: his Church teaches that such forgiveness is of no worth without repentance. In these and similar cases, we may, indeed, rightly urge it against the Church, that it teaches doctrines and observances which are not only objectionable in themselves, but are peculiarly liable to become still worse through the misconceptions of the ignorant; yet let us not impute to intelligent Catholics the gross ideas of the most illiterate.

It will be thought by many, that we have admitted much more in favor of the Romish Church than is either politic or just. We believe the concessions we have made to be just; if so, it matters little whether they be politic. Yet we conceive that there is no worse policy for the Christian controversialist, than to cast unmerited reproach on the faith he opposes. The reaction of every generous mind, when the injustice is exposed, will be far more hurtful to his cause than his invective can be advantageous to it.

Why, then, do we dissent from the Catholic religion? Venerable as it is by age, — held by the majority of pro-

fessing Christians, — what reasons exist against our own return to it? Reasons there are, in our opinion amply sufficient, after every admission in its favor which truth and justice can demand and grant.

First, we dissent from it for the same reason for which we dissent from many other Christian sects, whose members we still hold in the highest esteem. We do not believe that its peculiar doctrines are taught in Scripture. That they are not there taught is, indeed, to a great extent, admitted by implication, in the constant appeal which Romanists make to tradition. No reader of the New Testament alone would probably receive the impression that the Christian Church was a monarchy, whose sovereign and whose nobles were priests; that the bread and wine of the communion were, at every celebration, miraculously changed into the body and blood of Christ; or that the spirits of departed saints ought to be invoked to join their prayers with ours. The passages of Scripture thought to favor these doctrines are so few that thousands of Protestants have had the sacred volume constantly in their hands, and yet have never discerned in it evidence for the papacy, the doctrine of transubstantiation, or that of the invocation of the saints. They have read, indeed, that Jesus, pleased with the faith of Peter, declared that on him, as on a rock, the Church should be built; they have seen a sufficient fulfilment of those words in the prominent part taken by that apostle on the day of Pentecost, and on other occasions mentioned in the book of Acts, and have never thought of looking for a further accomplishment of them in the lives of ambitious statesmen like Gregory VII., or debauchees and tyrants like Alexander VI. They have read that the Saviour said of the bread and wine, "This is my body," and "This is my blood"; but they have also read that he said of himself, "I am the vine," "I

am the door," "I am the good shepherd." They have read that Cornelius knelt to Peter, and John to the angel who instructed him; but they have read, further, that both the saint and the angel declined the offered reverence.* To such Protestants, and to us, the absence of sufficient proof from Scripture for the Romish doctrines is in itself a fatal objection to them.

Nor less decisive is the argument that the doctrines in question are contrary to sound reason. We cannot now spend time in maintaining the authority of reason. Let those who can, believe that God, who gave us our understandings, would teach us anything contrary to their testimony. They forbid us to recognize a succession of infallible guides in a line of ecclesiastical rulers, some of whom have been stained with the grossest crimes, and who have not held consistently the same belief.† Reason forbids us to admit that the bread which our Lord held in his hand was his body, or the wine he poured forth the blood that flowed in his veins. Reason forbids us to ascribe omnipresence, the attribute of infinity, to finite beings, — supposing that the same saint can hear the invocations of his votaries in a thousand churches throughout the world at once. So long as we reverence our reason as the gift of God, we see not how we can unite with the Catholic Church.

Nor can we substitute the authority of tradition for that of Scripture and of reason, while we remember that our Lord himself censured those who in his day "made the

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* Acts x. 26, and Rev. xxii. 9.

† Liberius, Bishop of Rome, in the year 357, conformed to the views of the Arian Emperor, Constantius; and John XXII., in the fourteenth century, maintained an opinion concerning the "beatific vision" which he himself partially retracted afterwards, and which his successors more fully disavowed.

word of God of none effect by their traditions," — while we know, that, in ancient times, one general council contradicted another, and that Athanasians or Arians were considered Catholic according to the opinion of the reigning emperor.

We dissent from the Roman Catholic Church still further, because its customs are in many respects not such as to meet our approval. We feel the objection forcibly expressed by apostles of old against the bondage of "ordinances after the commandments and doctrines of men,"* — "the yoke which neither their fathers nor they were able to bear";† and having been delivered from that Jewish yoke, we desire to "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free."‡ To the imposition of fasts and penances we object, that their tendency is to obscure that free mercy of God, granted only upon true repentance in the heart, which is the Christian's proper ground of hope. The practice of auricular confession, with some advantages, has yet, we conceive, manifested a dangerous tendency to be perverted to the exercise of an undue control by the priests over the people. The celibacy of the clergy, and the institution of monasteries and convents, we consider as based on a wrong and unnatural theory of duty, and as having been proved by experience to be of bad moral tendency. The existence of ranks and lofty titles in the Church appears to us inconsistent with the spirit of him who said "My kingdom is not of this world," and who forbade his disciples to recognize any spiritual master but himself. Indulgences, we are informed, are still sold in Catholic countries, in principle similar to those which roused the spirit of Luther, though now disposed of with circumstances of less grossness. Masses for the dead we regard simply as an objec-

* Col. ii. 20, 22. † Acts xv. 10. ‡ Gal. v. 1.

tionable means of obtaining money from the living; for we cannot think that purchased prayers will change the righteous judgments of the Almighty.

We object, further, to the Romish Church, that its tendency has been to separate religion from virtue. We admit, indeed, that in theory it has acknowledged, more distinctly than many Protestants, the value of good works; but this merit has been more than overbalanced by the force with which it has ever urged submission to its own decrees and the practice of its own observances. Nor have the good works it has commended been, to such an extent as true religion teaches, the performance of our common duties. In a system so incumbered with ceremonies, it could not but be that these must engage far more than their share of attention. The low state of morals, in those countries where the Catholic Church holds unrestricted sway, testifies to the evils that must ensue, where the people have received the idea that the Almighty requires chiefly the performance of a round of ceremonies, instead of the worship of the grateful heart and virtuous life.

How far the priests of the Romish Church are guilty of the immoralities which some writers lay to their charge, is a question which we cannot now suitably discuss. We are convinced, that, while there has been some exaggeration, the conduct of the clergy in countries decidedly Catholic has given occasion to very grave reproach, and has exhibited the depraving tendency of the unnatural vows required of them.

Our next objection is, that, with all the difference which has been admitted between the Romish Church at present and that of three hundred years since, there are still found among its advocates those who scruple not to employ fraudulent means in its defence. The exhibition of the "holy

coat" at Treves roused up another Luther in the person of Ronge. At that stupendous fraud, besides the thousands of deceived spectators, there must have been hundreds of priests and laymen, intelligent enough to penetrate the deception, yet consciously assisting in its perpetration.

We have further to urge, that the Catholic system opposes inquiry, resists improvement, and exercises an unwarrantable control over the mind of man. Its first requirement is, submission to the infallible Church. To the private Christian, this authority is represented by his spiritual father, to whom he is bound to confess whatever the Church may represent to be a sin, and who can refuse him those sacraments, the want of which, he is taught to believe, may peril the salvation of his soul. The immense power thus obtained is exercised for the repression of inquiry and the resistance of improvement. The fair examination of conflicting opinions has never been encouraged by the Church of Rome. Its principle is not "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." Its discipline, consequently, is adverse to vigor and independence of intellect; and the results of such a system are likely to be manifested in other fields of action beside religion itself. Hence the far more rapid advance of civilization in Protestant than in Catholic communities.

Hence, too, — and here is our next objection, — the Catholic Church is the natural ally of despotism. If it is right that the private citizen should have the work of thinking done for him by others as regards his religious concerns, it appears a natural inference that it is right that he should have similar assistance in his political concerns. If it is well for a diocese to be guided by a bishop, it must be well for a province to be ruled by its viceroy, — one who is, like the bishop, the representative, not of the people themselves, but of an authority above them. If, finally, monarchy is the Divinely

appointed form for the Church, it can scarcely be otherwise with the state. It is true, as we have already seen, that in the Middle Ages the Church was often the protector of the people. But in the progress of the spirit of liberty, the Romish Church has fallen into the rear, and its influence is now arrayed to defend institutions which share with itself the authority and the weakness derived from the long but corrupting exercise of power.

Lastly, we object to that great organization, that it has completed the task of usefulness assigned it by Providence; — its time is past; — it is worn out. That it had its use we have seen. We are not of those who would unchristianize ten centuries of European history. But the high claims, before which monarchs once trembled, have now lost their power. The necessity, too, is gone, for which that power was exerted of old. The Mohammedan states no longer possess the strength to threaten Christendom. Learning needs not now to seek the shelter of monasteries; and female innocence may be safe without the protection of the cloister. Papal legates are neither invited nor welcomed to the settlement of disputes between nations, nor the papal sanction required to give authority to revolutionary governments. The Romish Church is an institution of past times. In the nature of things, it never can regain the ascendency it once possessed. What is peculiar to it, as distinct from other denominations, is proving its earthly nature by decay.

Having these reasons for withholding our assent from the doctrines and discipline of the Church of Rome, it becomes to us an important question how we should conduct ourselves with regard to it. Though, with the views just expressed, we cannot fear that the days of the Innocents and the Torquemadas will ever return, — though we have a well-grounded confidence that the Divine Being who has thus far

sustained the Protestant cause and the liberty of our country will continue to sustain them, — we yet know that God acts by human means, and that it is our duty to value and defend the truth and the freedom which he has permitted us to possess.

How shall they be defended ? By no means, assuredly, that are inconsistent with the very principles which we desire to maintain, — the freedom of conscience, the equal rights of all, the separation of ecclesiastical affairs from the civil power, the Christian law of love to all mankind.

There needs no proof that these principles forbid the unhallowed violence which has sometimes, to the disgrace of the Protestant name, been indulged against Romish institutions. The riot of Lord George Gordon in London, the burning of the convent in Charlestown, the mobs of Philadelphia, receive the decided condemnation of all who have rational views of liberty, order, justice, and religion.

May political means be employed to check the increase of Roman Catholicism among us ? — Among such means may be mentioned the provision in the Constitution of New Hampshire, which requires of those elected to certain offices an oath that they are of the Protestant religion. Among such means would also be included any increase in the strictness of our naturalization laws, made on the ground that the greater part of those to whom they are applicable are Roman Catholics.

For the employment of such means various plausible reasons may be assigned. The obedience paid by Catholics to the Pope is represented as inconsistent with the allegiance which every citizen owes to the state ; and we are told that the oath of naturalization is held by Romanists as subject to be annulled by the dispensing power of their spiritual superiors. The example of other nations, Catholic and Protes-

tant alike, is urged upon us. If the Jesuits have been banished even by those of the same religious belief with themselves, why, it may be asked, should they be endured among us? The reformers in the days of Elizabeth, the patriots who expelled James II., went much further in imposing penalties on popish priests and their adherents than any one proposes to go at the present day; and, severe as their conduct was, it has not deprived them of the admiration of posterity.

Under a different system of government from ours, and in a darker age, these arguments might be difficult to answer. As it is, they may be despatched in few words. The oath of naturalization expressly terminates all allegiance due, on the part of him who takes it, to any foreign prince or state. If this oath is violated, and the penalties of perjury or of treason incurred, the laws will be enforced without a view to any real or supposed dispensing power. Catholic writers maintain that a wide distinction exists between the obedience due to the Pope as head of the Church, and the allegiance of a citizen to the state. Ample declarations to this effect were made, when the subject of Catholic emancipation was under discussion in Great Britain; and we are bound by the general principles of justice to receive these as embodying the doctrine of the denomination. The expulsion of the Jesuits from various Catholic countries has been obviously on the ground, not of their belief, but of some conduct politically or morally wrong. Should such conduct be committed here, our law, which "judgeth no man before it hear him and know what he doeth,"* will punish the guilty, not as Catholics, nor as Jesuits, but as criminals. The example of English Protestants, when they were waging a strife for their very existence, and when hardly any one had yet conceived the idea of a state uncon-

* John vii. 51.

nected with the Church, is not applicable to our age and institutions; and, with all the respect we owe to the memory of Elizabeth and of William IV., we do not forget that the darkest stain on the memory of the former is her treatment of her Catholic heir, Mary of Scotland, — and that it is among the glories of the latter that he softened, as much as public feeling would permit, the severity of the penal laws against the Papists.

The obvious objection to any political measures against Roman Catholics is, that, in employing them, we should violate the very principle we seek to defend, — the principle of religious liberty. This, as understood in our country generally, involves the entire equality of all sects in the eye of the law. In this we find security and peace. The principle is politically too valuable, and morally too just, to permit us to depart from it by imposing disabilities on any class. Such conduct would, in the end, be advantageous to the cause opposed. Our own inconsistency would be urged as an argument against us; and the plea that Catholics were deprived of their civil rights would win attention from the sense of justice and the love of liberty among our people. But we surely need not urge motives of policy against conduct in itself unjust. If, on grounds of state alone, it is considered right to alter the naturalization laws, let it be done; but, for ourselves, the religious bearing of the question would present rather an objection to any change than an argument in its favor. We would avoid, as far as possible, the very appearance of an interference, on the part of the state, with matters of religious belief.

Shall we, then, relinquishing all political means of action, endeavour to resist the spread of a Romanist influence among us, by uniting in the common cause the energy of the various Protestant denominations? By such a union,

funds may be raised, societies and agencies established, newspapers and tracts published and distributed. We view the proposal for such a union with distrust, not from any suspicion of the motives of those engaged in it, but from objection to the principle of combining many sects against one. Dissenting widely from the Romish religion ourselves, we are yet unwilling to endorse all that other Protestants may be disposed to say of it. We conceive, too, that Christian charity will not be advanced by organizations so decidedly polemical. It appears to us, also, an evil precedent to place one denomination thus under the ban of all the others combined. A similar method of attack may be attempted next against the Unitarians or the Universalists ; or all who agree in preferring extemporaneous prayers, and in abjuring the authority of bishops, may be summoned to unite against a supposed aristocratical, if not monarchical, tendency on the part of Episcopalians. Our objections, it will be perceived, are directed against organized associations, not against the efforts of private enterprise and zeal, though sustained by members of various denominations. We admit, further, that these objections would be overborne by the conviction, did we entertain it, that the increase of Catholics among us was endangering our civil and religious liberties.

How, then, can we meet the growing evil, as it is supposed to be, of Roman Catholic influence ?

First, when occasion offers, by controversy, — fair, manly, courteous, Christian controversy. Learning and talent, truth and zeal, — let these be the weapons of Protestant warfare.

Secondly, by the exercise of reasonable caution. Christian charity does not require us to send our sons to Catholic colleges, or our daughters to convents, for education ; and if, in consequence of such imprudence, we find them embracing a faith different from our own, we shall have only ourselves to blame.

Thirdly, by earnest efforts to diffuse through our country a better faith. Instead of censuring the zeal of Romanists, let us emulate it. There are thousands in our boundless West, who must have from some source the waters of life, or they and the republics they are founding will long feel the sad deprivation. Honor be to those, of whatever name, Catholic or Protestant, American or European, who are devoting their treasure or their personal efforts to bring the healing waters to these "sheep without a shepherd." We believe that a blessing will rest on all their well-meant endeavours. We believe that they all teach the Gospel of Christ, though by many it is burthened with unprofitable human traditions. We believe that it is better that Catholicism should spread than infidelity. But while these are active, let us not be idle. To us, we trust, has been committed a purer faith; on us, then, rests a higher duty, a more weighty responsibleness. Let us conquer that false delicacy which forbids us to proclaim the truth uninvited; — that superstitious horror of sectarianism which makes us shrink from the duty we owe to Him who has given us our advantages.

But we must "speak the truth in love." Our conduct, if it be truly Christian, will do more to disarm Romanism of its power to injure, than our arguments can accomplish in converting its adherents.

We must, then, fourthly, demonstrate the beauty of our principles in our own deportment. Thousands of foreigners come among us annually, strongly prejudiced against Protestantism, which unfavorable circumstances in their own country have taught them to regard as identified with pride and oppression. What stronger argument for our faith can we offer them than the proof in our own conduct that we have Christian hearts? Let us be their benefactors, and they will not long believe that we are under the wrath of

the Almighty. The Catholic priest comes to us, zealous to uphold the Church he reveres, but liable, in his devotion to that cause, to be tempted to intrigue. Let our own example show him the beauty of fair dealing, and our kind and manly treatment of him take away all occasion for deception. If we receive him as a gentleman and as a Christian brother, not a papal bull can prevent his heart from being warmed towards us. Let us show that our religion produces true holiness of life, and we disprove the infallibility of all the councils that have anathematized us.

The course we recommend is not a new one. We believe it to be that which — with exceptions, indeed — has yet been generally pursued in our country towards Roman Catholics. It is the policy which circumstances, providentially arranged, assisted our fathers in adopting at the period when we became a nation. But for the participation of Catholic Maryland in our Revolution, and the aid extended to us by Catholic France, the clause of exclusion which marks the Constitution of New Hampshire might have been inserted in that of the United States. Thanks to God, the evil was prevented. The principles of religious liberty, and of entire separation between church and state, were fully recognized in our national compact. Since that time, their simple sublimity, their obvious justice, their happy operation, have more and more endeared them to our people. They cannot now, we trust, be disturbed in favor either of Catholic or of Protestant exclusiveness.

We look on the Romish Church with wonder, but without fear. Protestants are becoming more and more zealous and enlightened. Catholicism itself is modified by the genial influence of friendly treatment and advancing civilization. We trust in Him whose almighty hand has guided thus far in wisdom and in love the progress of ages, — who, when

the hierarchy of Rome was in its strength, used it to accomplish his own great designs, — that he will not suffer to be restored, for purposes of evil, a power which is needless now for good; and that, whether by sudden change or by successive modifications, he will bring this great section of his Church upon the common ground which Protestants profess to occupy, — the ground of the freedom of conscience, the right of private judgment, and the recognition of a holy life as more important in the sight of God than creeds and ceremonies.

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THE

STRICT SYSTEM AND THE EASY.

By F. D. HUNTINGTON.

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THE STRICT SYSTEM AND THE EASY.

It has been sometimes brought as a charge against certain rational and liberal views of Christianity, that they form an *easy system;* that they do not present difficulties enough in the way of salvation, either to the understanding or the will; that they are lax instead of being stringent, and accommodating instead of being inflexible. As far as this accusation touches some of the leading doctrines of the faith of Liberal Christians, I wish to give it a brief examination.

If the charge is only meant to signify that these doctrines do really remove, take out of the way, or even diminish, any obstacles to the salvation of souls, I have no anxiety to disprove it. Such a peculiarity would seem to be a conspicuous merit in any religious system where it should be found. Show me a form of belief so simple and so powerful, that it annihilates actual obstructions to Christian progress, makes duty plain, solves perplexing questions, clears up absurdities and paradoxes, cuts contradictions in two, makes the requisitions of the Gospel appear reasonable, and God's character intelligible, and his government just and merciful, and Christ's redemption a moral and not a merely official and ceremonial redemption, and, in short, the whole Chris-

tian scheme a rational scheme, worthy of its author and adapted to human nature, — show me such a form of faith, and I do not hesitate to say that its simplicity, and its power as growing out of that simplicity, must commend it as true, and must exalt it into an infinite superiority, both spiritual and logical, over one that multiplies difficulties needlessly, confuses the understanding, appalls the moral sense, terrifies the judgment, is inconsistent with itself, and darkens counsel by words without knowledge. An easy system in this sense I should prefer, rather than the opposite, the hard system. There are quite difficulties enough of a natural and inevitable kind to hinder growth in holiness, to embarrass our work of forming a Christian character, and to separate us from our God, without creating any gratuitous and superfluous ones to keep men out of the kingdom of heaven. The more of such difficulties we can get rid of, the better for ourselves, the safer for our virtue, the greater glory to the cause of righteousness and to God. All honor to any religious system that should abolish or abate one of them!

The only difficulties we want left in our Christianity are those that tax our energies and discipline our resolution, — that try, and thus increase, our strength, — not those that disconcert our assurance and baffle our comprehension: hardships for effort, not hardships for faith. We want a system that is hard, not to the reason, but to the performance; not adapted to dishearten, but to stimulate us; not to thwart our minds, but to quicken our zeal; not a religion that is hard to take in, but hard to work out; not a doctrine that is hard to believe, but hard to do.

This, however, I am afraid, is not the meaning of the charge in question. The idea intended to be conveyed by it is, that these doctrines only *pretend* to make salvation easy, but do not; that, in fact, instead of making salvation easy,

they make it impossible, to those who receive them. The idea is, that they leave men *at ease in their sins*, encourage them to laxity, lead them astray, and cheat them with a flattering delusion.

I feel no hesitation in saying, that, if this objection could be substantiated, it would raise a grave question with regard to the doctrines themselves, and prove a fatal flaw in their practical influence. I could feel but little confidence in a faith that represented the work of the Christian life as an easy work, — the task of working out one's salvation as a trivial and careless pastime. It would be a wretched deception. Converts that could be beguiled under such a pretence would not be worth having for the honor of their fellowship, and a foul wrong would be done them either by themselves or their misleaders. The Christian life is no such facile thing. Maintaining it, growing in it, is no such light labor. Our noblest possessions are gained by strenuous exertion. The best part of character is earned by toil and by sacrifice. It is as true a maxim in the spiritual economy of the world as in the material, "Cheaply got, cheaply held." What costs us little is little prized. The less a virtue requires of us, the less its estimation. There is no nurse of inward power so grand as trial. Nothing so exalts and purifies the soul as discipline. Goodness finds its mightiest service in the resistance of evil and the conquest of indolence. To overcome a sluggish propensity is to do great battle for truth and right. How it freshens and elevates the whole spirit to put forth a resolute struggle for conscience' sake! The moral energies, like the muscles of the arm, expand and grow firm by laborious use. We become attached and loyal to great principles in proportion as we suffer for them, — just as we feel the fondest attachment to those friends and kindred whose feebleness lays the largest

demand upon our fidelity. Effort ripens true greatness, as repose never can. It is here that we find the wisdom of all crosses and afflictions, and see their mystery interpreted, their heavenly meaning unfolded and explained. It was this truth that the Apostle had in mind when he exclaimed, "Behold, we count them happy which endure."

Let me proceed now to notice two or three of the prominent points about which Christians are honestly divided in opinion, with special reference to this flippant and false remark, that the doctrines we hold are lax and easy. We shall find some occasion, as we go on, to reverse the sentence, and to transfer the charge of providing reliefs and evasions for the conscience to the opposing scheme.

Take first the doctrine of Christ's death, or the Atonement. One portion of Christendom hold that doctrine in this form: — That God being offended with his earthly children for their sins, both his justice and his anger required that the full measure of man's debt by disobedience should be made up to him, in the sufferings and blood of an innocent being, his beloved Son, and at the same time a part of himself, having the infinite nature of Deity, so that all sinful men, to the end of time, who would rely on that substitution, should have their offences vicariously wiped away, and stand acquitted through the undeserved though voluntary punishment of Christ for their transgressions. Another portion of believers hold the doctrine of the Atonement in this form: — Agreeing with the others that the great object and problem was the reconciliation of sinning men and a pure God, they maintain that the change requisite for this reconciliation must be in the hearts and lives of the men who have committed the sins, — not in the mind and disposition of God, who never sinned, never needed to be changed, never needed to be pacified, being an infinitely merciful, and

forbearing, and compassionate Father; they believe, therefore, that God, in his love and pity towards his children, sent his Son to instruct them, to preach righteousness, to bring a Gospel of precepts and principles, to set before them, in his own person, a living and complete example of embodied, perfect, sinless excellence, of virtue and holiness, righteousness and piety, a faultless character; and *above all*, when the ingratitude and selfishness of men rejected and crucified this Saviour, then to die, willingly and calmly, both in triumphant vindication of his truth, as the seal of his sincerity, and as a visible and affecting pledge, that he who could thus give up his own Son to death for our sakes will freely forgive our sins whenever we repent and return to him in prayer, — a pledge, that he who so loved the world as to give his only-begotten Son for it will also give us pardon in our penitence. These are two forms of the doctrine of the Atonement. The question now is, Which is the lax, the easy form of it, most likely to quiet the conscience and let the careless sleep? Which is it? Is it that which teaches that the difficulty in the way of our acceptance rests with God, and must be removed there, or that which teaches that it lies always with man himself, and must be removed from his selfish and worldly heart? Which is most likely to encourage men in stupid inaction, and continue them in sin, — the doctrine that tells them to rely on the blood and the merits of another, or that which tells them that unless they repent, and bring forth the fruits of repentance, and work the works of righteousness, they shall "all likewise perish"? If it were your express desire and design to divest them of solicitude, to furnish a pillow for their self-complacency, and an opiate for their sense of responsibility, which message would you carry them, — that they must only look to Christ for an example, a helper, a guide, and an ex-

pression of the Father's promise to forgive them on condition only of their hearty penitence and consistent exertions; or that the substitute for their transgressions had been offered, the sinner bought off, the account settled, and the inexorable Judge satisfied in his claim? Which falls in most readily and most dangerously with mortal passions, mortal weakness, and mortal procrastination? Which is the more adapted to persuade men to put off conversion, and trust to a death-bed paroxysm, — the view which flatters them with the hope that this completed sacrifice can be accepted and availed of, by a mysterious operation of the mind, in a moment, at any time; or that which warns them that even the redemption of Jesus will be of no avail, except the character and life are conformed to his spirit, and their whole fabric built upon his principles? In one word, which puts men at ease? Which is the lax doctrine?

It is pleasant to believe, that, owing to the counteracting influence of other sentiments, and of some grains of common sense lurking at the bottom of every mind, notwithstanding the presence there of an irrational and mischievous creed, the practical effects of the wrong side of this doctrine are not so ruinous as they would be if it were left wholly to itself. Many Christians are better than their articles of belief. When the faith that is precious and sacred to us, however, is exposed to obloquy unjustly and injuriously, it is at least fair to show that the blame does not rest on the truth, but on the error; that Christianity is not accountable for the absurdities that cause heathens to reject it, but superstition; that the Gospel of Jesus is not to be compromised by the mistakes of some of its misguided or partially informed disciples. It was quite justifiable, and a loyal as well as witty service to truth, for the friend of Coleridge, when the latter wrote, upon a pile of Unitarian tracts, "Salvation made

easy, or every man his own redeemer," to write upon a pile of Calvinistic pamphlets in return, "Salvation made easy, or one man redeemer for all other men."

Look next at two opposite forms of the doctrine of regeneration or conversion, and judge which is the easier. Both parties agree that all men, being sinners, need a change, need conversion, need to be renewed. On this point there is no difference; they differ only with regard to the method, the means, and the time. Now is it not plain that they who hold that every man must set about this great work himself, immediately, using only his natural powers, sustained by his faith and prayers, to accomplish it, and then continuing the work, repeating the repentance, renewing the renewal, and reviving the holy impression every day and every hour through life, or till the regeneration is entire, and the holiness without spot, — is it not plain that they who hold this view enjoy an evident advantage, on the score of evangelical strictness, over those who represent the change as supernatural, sent from a sphere beyond man's power, carried on only by a wholly peculiar process, and, done once, done for life and for ever? If any thing in the compass of knowledge is obvious, it must be obvious that the former view presents the harder task, and the longer. The one bids us wait and expect, the other bids us rouse ourselves and act. The one bids us watch for the important hour to come; the other, to go out and meet it and bring it on. The one assures us that we are regenerated only by the mysterious spirit coming to us, we know not how or when, like a whirlwind on the mariner in tropical seas, suspending our free-will and seizing possession of us by no law of mental action that we can fathom; the other, that though we must of necessity depend on God for all our strength and all our help in this, precisely as in every other effort and purpose

of our lives, yet it is a step as intelligible as any other, as simple as any other, as much within the limits of our familiar knowledge and experience as any other. The one lays unqualified stress upon the phrase that we are to *be converted;* the other sounds in our ears the inspiriting admonition that, God willing, we must convert ourselves; — and we know that God *is always willing.*

And now, in the name of reason, and sense, and Scripture, which of these two representations of the Christian doctrine of the new birth belongs to an easy, and which to a difficult, system? Which is lax? That which sends forth the ringing appeal to be up and doing, or that which slumberously enjoins us to stand still in passive preparation? That which says that the whole work is done once for all, or that which says it is never done below, but must be evermore, and evermore diligently, striven for and wrought upon, while we struggle on higher and higher, from virtue to virtue, in unending and untiring progress in the path that shineth brighter and brighter towards perfect day?

The transition is natural, in the same train of thought, from the doctrine of regeneration to the doctrine of human nature, — from the second birth of the soul to its first birth. For the question immediately arises, What are we to be regenerated or converted from? One section of Christendom replies, From our original nature; the office of the second birth is to neutralize the moral quality of the first, and carry us out of the condition into which the first brought us. Another section dissents from this, maintaining, that, as the same God is the author of both creations, one cannot be intended to undo or contradict the moral result of the other. They must be consistent and harmonious parts of one plan. Accordingly, this portion suppose that it is the office of con-

version to carry us forward, through the renunciation of our wrong propensities, through the humbling of our pride, the abasement of our self-sufficiency, the softening of our ungodly and voluntary indifference, into that renovation of the inward man, — the image of God in which God created us, — and that spiritual consciousness, which is the new life of the soul. We believe, that is, that the original nature was free, with mixed tendencies, void of offence, unstained by ancestral guilt, responsible for no hereditary corruption, however prone to evil; not sent into the world morally chained and handcuffed, and then commanded to work in the Maker's service, nor with the feet tied, and then commanded to run on his errands; but having an unfettered capability to perform in this life, and just in the conditions we are surrounded by, exactly what is required, — to do justly, and love mercy, and walk humbly with our God. Here, again, we have the two systems contrasted. Observe, I do not allude to the innumerable other objections, Scriptural and logical, to the dogma of total and innate depravity. I speak of it now solely with reference to its ease or difficulty. To me it appears the laxest theory in the whole circle of theological possibilities. Convince me that I was created impure and vicious throughout, and, knowing that God was my creator and designer, — not Adam, nor any ancestor, nor myself, but God, — I have no longer the least doubt that sin was the design of my creation, that transgression is the law of my being, that wickedness is my appropriate destiny. My nature must indicate the purpose of my formation. Why should I resist it? I have no further quarrel with my appetites and passions. I am ready to follow wherever inclination leads. My nature being totally bad, of course conscience, a faculty of my nature, is bad; why, then, should I obey its dictates any more than those of

sense and selfishness? This certainly reduces life to a sufficiently lax system.

When we compare the lives of Calvinists with the dogmas of Calvinism, we are inclined to reckon inconsistency among the virtues. The contrast proves, that, after all, sincere believers are governed more by those grand fundamental principles of righteousness not written in their creeds, than by the articles over which they clamor, and the peculiarities for which they do wordy battles.

But besides, if I am totally blasted and defiled by nature, I have no capacity of self-help. I can do nothing good if I try, and achieve no improvement if I would. In this case I *must*, of sheer necessity, wait to be converted, or wait not to be converted. So far, the system is true to itself, and adheres together. My course is plain. With no power of self-recovery, with an entire moral inability, with even my best aims offensive to Heaven, I must lie with pinioned arms, and float down the muddy current of sensuality and sloth, till it pleases the Master of an arbitrary election to snatch me from my degradation. Tell me of effort, toil, struggle! — it is a heartless mockery of my imbecility.

Nothing can be devised to cripple the soul so utterly, and then so utterly to excuse it, as this strange opinion, of human manufacture. But show me that I have all the power by nature to do well, aspirations for it planted in me, calls and invitations to it from my natural impulses and affections, knowledge to see the truth and ability to pursue it, an untrammelled conscience to guide me, and Christ for my example and Saviour, and then I have a difficult, a gigantic task before me, — to fulfil this exalted destiny, to live worthily of this heavenly vocation, to train and develop these germs of goodness seated in my constitution, save them from perversion and evil, and bring my soul to its rightful immortality.

Then, seeing that God made man upright, I am forbidden to seek out inventions, and am quickened to all righteousness. The task is no longer easy, the faith is no longer lax, but stern, and large, and difficult, as a noble nature's faith and work should always be.

That phrase incidentally used just now, "Christ for my example," opens another thought. If Christ be Deity, he is no longer in the nearest sense our example. Infinitely removed above us, he has not sympathized with human sufferings, nor been the pattern of human virtue, under human trial. We are relieved, then, of the hard task of copying him in all things. At every step we must feel that he drew from a treasury not open to us. That high standard calls to us and commands us on no longer. So much the easier will be our system. Restore him to his real relation, as the Son of the Father, and the representative of his goodness and love on earth, but a brother also to our humanity, tempted like as we are, yet without sin, and then our work of imitation grows real again, and our faith difficult in proportion. We can be at ease no further. The doctrine of the Trinity, then, is the easy doctrine, not the opposite.

Once more; compare the views of eternal life, immortality, retribution. One makes all retribution to come hereafter, and to consist entirely of the *consequences* of our sins, — consequences that may possibly be escaped by that easy and delusive, but impious and unfounded, device of arbitrary election, saving some independently of all merits. The other makes the misery, the shame, the disgrace, and the pain to consist in sin itself, and its effects upon the soul. Is it difficult to see which is the easy system? Let men imagine that there are but two states, of unvarying uniformity, hereafter, and those not adjusted nor proportioned to the exact deserts of character here, but determined rather by

foreign control, and they will think of a thousand easy methods of obviating the worse fate, and escaping the pit. They will not practically believe what they theoretically suppose they do, and so will be left with loose restraints upon their conduct. But let them understand, that, here and hereafter both, there must be in every soul misery and debasement in the exact ratio of guilt, that precisely what every man soweth he shall reap, that there is no peace anywhere for the bad heart, and then he will awake to the solemn duties of a difficult probation.

I submit one general and broad principle more. The system we adhere to as that of Christ and his Gospel can never be an easy or a lax one in practice, — simple as it is to the understanding and clear to the eye of faith, — for this reason, that it lays the whole stress and sanction of Christianity on personal holiness, on Christian character, on the affections and conduct, the heart and life. There is no room, where this is the strain of teaching, for idleness, no quarter for excuses, or evasions, or repose. Action is the law of that faith. Work, work for God and man, is its first and last command. Formulas and words are easy to repeat; articles of faith are easy to profess; covenants and creeds are easy to subscribe; but great self-denying deeds, glorious as they are, sublime as they are, are not always easy to perform. They are like lofty mountain-peaks that tower over plains and valleys; their grandeur lifts up the soul that contemplates them to their own serene elevation in the skies; but your feet must climb, wearily and patiently, if you would stand upon their summits. Other Christians insist on special dogmas and special ceremonies; we insist on that vast, difficult, comprehensive thing, the righteousness, purity, devotion, of the whole of daily life, — a consistent virtue and a cheerful piety. It has been justly said, that if Chris-

tianity had not encountered a difficult reception, we could not accord to it the name of a perfect and absolute religion. "And the great radical doctrine, that inward goodness is the fundamental requisition of the Gospel, is not popular, for the same reason that Christianity was not originally popular; because it is in direct opposition to the formality, the traditionary self-importance, the reliance upon mysterious and technical securities for the favor of God, which suit so much better the sloth, the infirmity, and the actual sinfulness of men. The Jew thought it very hard that his sacrifices, his washings and temple service, his anise and cummin, should be thrust aside as empty and worthless, and a rigid morality, a heart-honesty, put in its place." He cried out upon the Messiah's laxity. And so it has been in all ages since with those who have aimed to reinstate and restore "the naked moral simplicity and grandeur of the religion of Jesus Christ. All reformers, returning to this original simplicity, have encountered deadly hostility from those whose Christian hopes repose upon the soothing, flattering falsehood of some theological, ecclesiastical, or less spiritual substitutes for the moral perfection of Christianity."

But know, O man, that faith without works is dead. Let us have the strict conscience, not the narrow mind. Let us have a religion, difficult as you will for the law of the members and the lusts of the flesh, but simple to the understanding and easy only to our belief. Let it summon all our energies to the field, and raise our standard of duty higher and higher, and prompt our hands to generous work. This will make us truly humble, prostrate us in lowly dissatisfaction and penitence for our poor accomplishments in spiritual living, inspire us to ever-new diligence, watchfulness, and prayer. This will lead us into the kingdom of heaven. There is no easy road, no broad gate, to that kingdom.

If there were a smooth and easy way, perhaps our timid feet might be glad to walk in it. But it would not be best for our real advancement; and at its end we should find no salvation, no life eternal, no true kingdom of heaven, waiting to receive us into its glory.

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THE GOSPEL OF LUKE THE APOSTLES' CREED.

By AUSTIN CRAIG.

[Reprinted from the Christian Inquirer.]

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THE GOSPEL OF LUKE THE APOSTLES' CREED.

"Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word; it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest know the certainty of those things wherein thou hast been instructed." — *The Preface of Luke's Gospel.*

WRITERS on theology have been much divided by the question, "Did the Apostles compose and publish a creed?"

Some have professed to find in the records of Christian antiquity ample evidence that the Apostles did publish a creed. Others, however, affirm that the evidence referred to is not sufficiently reliable to determine a question of so great consequence. All concede that the meagre skeleton, commonly called "the Apostles' Creed," is a production of an age subsequent to the Apostles. Scholars have diligently sifted the dust of Christian antiquity, hoping to find the veritable "Apostles' Creed," but their labors leave us where we commence, upon the threshold of an unanswered inquiry.

Did the Apostles publish a creed? If they did ——! And if it could but be placed in our hands, uncorrupted and entire, as it came from the hands of the inspired Twelve ——!

What if the Church should yet find it? What if, from some old Eastern library, that had escaped the notice of modern scholars, this precious document should come forth? Or what if, among the manuscripts exhumed from Herculaneum, buried and forgotten for centuries, there should be found the veritable original itself, in the handwriting, perhaps, of Peter, and subscribed by the whole Apostolic Council?

What world-wide sensation must such a discovery produce! How the hearts of all sects would flutter, and each would say, "Now shall our claims be tested and established. Now will the long-drawn agony and suspense of ages be ended! Henceforth controversy and division among Christians shall be no more; and all who will may know the truth."

But did the Apostles publish a creed? I answer, When I have regard to the mere reason of the thing, I conclude that they did. "The wants of the age" imperatively demanded it. For when the pretensions of Christianity became noised abroad, it is reasonable to suppose that men began to inquire into the peculiar claims and doctrines of the new religion. And calm and thoughtful men could hardly be content with the representations of the first Christian convert whom they might meet, but would be desirous of obtaining reliable information. Such would naturally ask the convert, "What do your leaders, your divinely commissioned Apostles, say?"

It is also reasonable to suppose, that the Apostles themselves would not willingly leave the representation of Christian doctrines to the imperfect knowledge of any believer

whom an inquirer into the merits of Christianity might chance upon, but would be disposed, either in an associated or individual capacity, to set forth a plain declaration of their religious principles, for the instruction of such as were desirous of learning them. Accordingly, we find that such a declaration of the essentials of Christianity was published, and with that design.

The Gospel written by Luke is, both in fact and in form, the Apostles' Creed.

These points are clearly presented in the preface of this Gospel.

First. This preface implies that many who lacked the requisite qualifications had undertaken to write synopses of the articles of Christian faith. In order, therefore, that the inquirer might possess a full and reliable account of the doctrines of Christianity, Luke was induced to compose and publish his Gospel history. His qualifications for such a work were of a very high order. He declares expressly, that he had "perfect understanding of all things (relating to Christianity) from the very first."

He assures us, also, that his Gospel history is substantially an Apostolic document; inasmuch as he wrote his account of the facts and doctrines of Christianity, "as they delivered them, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word."

Secondly. This preface informs us that Luke wrote his Gospel for the particular instruction of a certain friend of his, — a Gentile named Theophilus. It is supposed that this man was a person of some distinction. It is worthy of note, that Luke addresses him with the same title that Paul employed in his reply to the governor of Judea; which title, in our common version of the Scriptures, is translated "most noble," — "most noble Festus."

That Theophilus was no ordinary man is a fact which, though unimportant to our argument, is suggestive of some interesting thoughts. For had the Gospel of Luke been written for the instruction of a man of inferior intelligence, the writer would perhaps have contented himself with giving a brief and simple statement of only the absolute essentials of Christianity. But our Evangelist was writing for the instruction of a man of distinction and intelligence ; a man who was probably capable of understanding as many and as deep mysteries as the Evangelist himself. There was, therefore, nothing to hinder Luke from imparting, and Theophilus from receiving, a complete knowledge of the facts and doctrines of the Christian faith.

I will here remark, that the first preachers of our religion did not teach one set of principles to the common people, and another to the learned. Some of the "philosophers" contemporary with the Apostles had, indeed, one class of doctrines for "the vulgar," and a more abstruse class for "the initiated." Not so the Apostles. For the religion of Jesus, being equally designed for all, — for the poor and illiterate as well as for the rich and learned, — proposes the same principles for the belief of all classes and ranks of men.

Thirdly. This preface informs us that Luke, being familiarly acquainted with all the facts and doctrines of Christianity, took up his pen with a design of writing an accurate and compendious statement of them, for the instruction of his friend Theophilus, who was already partially acquainted with the doctrines of the Christian religion, and desired to become proficient in them.

So far this preface. Now, when I consider the circumstances which occasioned the publication of this Gospel history, — when I reflect upon the author's intimate and

profound acquaintance with all the peculiarities of Christianity, — and when I remember the situation and character of the friend for whose particular instruction this Gospel was written, I find myself compelled to the conclusion, — a conclusion by every rule of rational logic inevitable, — that the Gospel of Luke is a complete statement of all the essential facts and doctrines of the Christian religion.

I would, therefore, expect to find in this Gospel such mention and elucidation of the several doctrines of Christianity, as would suffice to fit an inquiring soul for the kingdom of heaven. If there be in Christianity any difficult and knotty questions, hard to be understood, but necessary to be known; or if it contain any mysteries, the knowledge of which is essential to human salvation; I would expect to find them all fairly presented and fully treated in the Gospel of Luke. And so complete, indeed, are its representations of the essential facts and doctrines of our religion, that if it were the only book in the world upon the subject of Christianity, no man could say that he had not sufficient light upon all the great points of faith and duty to conduct him to the mansions of the just.

This truth, however, rests not for support upon mere inferences. It has a firmer basis, — a basis of Evangelical authority. Our author declares, in positive terms, that his Gospel history is an account of every thing doctrinal and practical pertaining to Christianity. In the preface to the "Acts of the Apostles," Luke makes reference to his "Gospel" in the following terms: — "The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus did and taught until the day in which he was taken up." * This passage is de-

* In King James's Translation, this passage is rendered as follows: — "The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that

cisive. It explicitly declares that Luke's Gospel is a complete account of the acts and doctrines of the Messiah.

It will be well in this place to anticipate and remove a doubt that may arise in some minds, whether Jesus, during his personal ministry, performed all the acts and taught all the truths which the salvation of our race requires. Let us see what the Scriptures say upon this point.

Immediately before the crucifixion, Jesus testified to the Roman governor the purpose of his advent and ministry. "To this end," said he, "was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." John xviii. 37.

Jesus came to bear witness to the truth, because by its instrumentality men are saved from their sins. "Ye shall know the truth," said Jesus to the Jews, "and the truth shall make you free from your sins." John viii. 32–36.

It therefore appears that the design of the Saviour's mission was to testify and establish that truth which the salvation of a sinner requires. This mission, we may confidently affirm, was fulfilled by Jesus during his personal ministry on earth. For almost the last words of his life were, "I have finished the work which Thou (Father) gavest me to do."

If, therefore, Jesus during his personal ministry did teach

Jesus began both to do and teach." For the sake of the unlearned reader, I remark, that the phrase "began to do and teach" is idiomatic, and means simply "did and taught." Accordingly, recent critics and translators have thus rendered the passage. I make this statement, in order that none of my readers may fall into the error of supposing that Jesus merely began the work that was intrusted to him, leaving it to be continued and finished by others. This was not the case; for Jesus expressly declared, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."

and perform all things necessary as the means of human salvation, the present argument may be narrowed to the limits of the following questions: —

First. Was the Evangelist Luke acquainted with the whole extent of the work which Jesus performed for our salvation?

He was; for he assures us that he had "perfect understanding of all things (pertaining to Christianity) from the very first."

Second. Does Luke claim that his Gospel is a complete account of all the essential facts and doctrines of Christianity?

He does; for in the preface to the "Acts of the Apostles," he refers to his Gospel history as a "former treatise" which he had made concerning "all that Jesus did and taught, until the day in which he was taken up."

We may, therefore, confidently conclude that Luke's Gospel is a complete summary of the essentials of Christianity. It is a confession of the Apostolic faith. It presents the Christian system before us in its just proportions and in its entireness. It omits no fact necessary to establish the Messiahship of Jesus, nor any doctrine upon which depends the salvation of mankind. In short, it is a full, plain, accurate, and authentic account of all things essentially pertaining to the Christian religion.

Had I known this fact years ago, it might have saved me years of painful doubt. Like many others, I have been bewildered by the contradictory creeds of Christian sects. I saw them professing to regard the Bible as the sole authority in all matters of religious faith and life. I saw that nearly all affected to regard it as a plain revelation of the Divine Will. I saw, also, that the creeds of all sects were conflictive and contradictory; and that their partisans

mutually denounced each other as deniers of evident fundamentals of Christianity. In view of these things my mind was frequently oppressed with doubts. I asked myself, Is it possible that God has left us to doubt of subjects affecting our salvation? Or can it be that the Bible is the plain book that my religious teachers assert? If it be such, why, I asked myself, do the sects differ so widely and so acrimoniously in regard to its teachings?

These doubts, begotten by the discussions of the sects, were at length removed by the study of the Divine records. Only this could remove them. A profounder acquaintance with the technicalities of a sectarian theology serves only to increase the perplexity that the first knowledge of it commences. The doubter must throw aside his sectarian schemes of divinity, and have recourse to the Bible. He must read the words of Jesus. He must study the Sermon on the Mount. In this he will discover no fine-spun theories, no evasive subtilties, no ingenious speculations. Jesus never occupied himself with such things. He dealt only with realities, — realities solemn as life, plain as duty, comprehensive as man's relations, and boundless and engrossing as his everlasting interests. Let the doubter study these. And let him carefully study the Gospel of Luke. This Gospel contains (as it professes) a complete account of every fundamental fact and doctrine of Christianity. But it contains almost nothing that is presented as essential in the creeds of many religious sects. And, what is very surprising, the dogmas which usually occupy the prominent places in the sectarian creeds, are never once mentioned, — apparently never once alluded to, in the full account of Christianity given us by the Evangelist Luke.

When I peruse the creeds of the prominent sects of Christendom, I find them chiefly occupied with insisting

upon the doctrines of "Predestination," "Election," "Total Depravity," "Imputed Righteousness," "Justification by Faith alone," "The Tri-personal Trinity," and kindred doctrines, — doctrines confessedly dark and mysterious, — doctrines which put the powers of my understanding at defiance, and rudely assail my highest conceptions of the Divine justice and benevolence.

In this perplexity I become desirous of learning what Luke says upon these subjects. I carefully peruse his full and accurate statement of Christian doctrines, and ask myself the following questions: —

What does Luke's Gospel say of God's having, from all eternity, unchangeably foreordained all things whatsoever come to pass?

Not one word!

What does it say respecting the unconditional election of a part of mankind to eternal life, and of the reprobation of the remainder to everlasting perdition?

Not one word!

What does it say about the imputation of Adam's personal guilt to his posterity?

Not one word!

What does it say about the existence of three distinct and independent personal agents in the Godhead; each of whom by himself is truly God, while yet the whole three are but one God?

Not one word!

What does it say in relation to Christ's dying in order to appease the wrath of God?

Not one word!

What does it say concerning the justification of sinners by faith in the merit of Jesus's atoning blood alone?

Not one word!

The Gospel of Luke is as silent as the grave in regard to all these dogmas. And never (at least never to my knowledge) has a single verse of this Gospel been quoted as a direct support of Unconditional Election and Reprobation, of the Tri-personal Trinity, or of the Imputed Righteousness of Christ, or of Purchased Grace, or of Justification by Faith alone, without works, or of the Total Depravity of Infants, or of many other sectarian doctrines, repugnant alike to the spirit of Jesus and to the word of his testimony.

I know not how this fact may affect the minds of others, but for myself I aver, that, if these doctrines be fundamental in Christianity, Luke's omitting to mention them in his professedly complete account of Christianity is the most surprising fact that the history of our religion affords.

Let us take, in illustration of this point, some one of the above-named sectarian doctrines; as, for instance, the doctrine of the Tri-personal Trinity. I select this doctrine because a larger number of the sects in Christendom profess faith in it, than may be found agreeing upon any other controverted and sectarian dogma. All the following-named sects are Trinitarian: viz. the Roman Catholic, Episcopalian, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, besides many minor sects in Europe and America. All these sects unite in regarding the doctrine of the Tri-personal Trinity as a prominent fundamental of the Christian religion.

This doctrine teaches that God exists in three separate and distinct persons, of whom each is self-existent, and all are equal in power, wisdom, glory, and eternity. Each of these three persons (we are told) exercises a special office, and sustains to his Divine compeers, and to the created universe, relations peculiar to himself. Thus we are told that the first of these Divine persons is the Creator and Upholder

of all things; the second is the Redeemer and Judge; and the third, the Sanctifier of the souls of men.

The terms in which this doctrine has been defined are such as naturally lead ordinary minds to infer that its advocates teach the existence of three Gods. The notion of three Gods, however, is disclaimed by the advocates of the Tri-personal Trinity, who insist that they, equally with others, maintain the undivided unity of God. Thus the Athanasian Creed — a formula of the Trinitarian faith, composed in the fourth or fifth century, and generally approved by the "orthodox" sects as a fair statement of the Trinitarian doctrine * — tells us that "The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God. And yet they are not three Gods, but one God.

"So, likewise, the Father is Lord, the Son Lord, and the Holy Ghost Lord.

"And yet not three Lords, but one Lord. For like as we are compelled by the Christian verity to acknowledge every person by himself to be God and Lord, so we are forbidden by the Catholic religion to say there be three Gods or three Lords."

Having completed its delineations of this doctrine, the Creed declares the importance of this faith in the following terms: — "He, therefore, that will be saved, must thus think of the Trinity."

In the estimation of the author of the Athanasian Creed, a man cannot be saved who rejects the doctrine of the Tri-personal Trinity. Whether the sects of our age, who maintain the truthfulness of this doctrine, approve the condemnatory clauses of this creed, I cannot say. For the sake of

* The Athanasian Creed occupies a place in the Church standards of the Roman Catholic, English, and Reformed Dutch Churches.

Christian charity, I hope they do not. Nevertheless, it is a well-known fact, that the leading orthodox sects refuse Christian fellowship to those who deny the doctrine of the Tri-personal Trinity. They regard faith in it as essential to the perfection of the Christian character. Thus, a writer in the "Princeton Review," an "orthodox" authority of high repute, says: — "There are certain doctrines so settled by the faith of the Church, that they are no longer open questions. They are finally adjudged and determined. If men set aside the Bible, and choose to speak or write as philosophers, then, of course, the way is open for them to teach what they please. But for Christians, who acknowledge the Scriptures as their rule of faith, there are doctrines which they are bound to take as settled beyond all rational or innocent dispute. It is high time, therefore, it should be universally agreed among Christians, that the rejection of these doctrines, [namely, the Trinity, and kindred doctrines,] as determined by the faith of the Church, is the rejection of Christianity, and should be so regarded and treated."

It is not my purpose in this place to question the truthfulness of the doctrine of the Tri-personal Trinity. If my readers please, we will proceed upon the assumption that the doctrine is true. Still, I contend that the doctrine is not essential; that the religious sects have very much overestimated its importance; and that, in making faith in this doctrine a test of Christian fellowship, our modern churches have widely departed from the practice of the Apostolic age.

A doctrine may be Scriptural, and yet not an appointed test of Christian character. In the neglect of this evident truth, we conceive the error of our Trinitarian brethren to have originated. Books have been multiplied to show the

accordance of the Tri-personal Trinity with the testimony of the Scriptures; but the writers have failed to show that the doctrine is a divinely appointed test of Christian character. We complain that our Trinitarian brethren acted without warrant from Heaven in refusing to acknowledge as Christians godly persons who cannot agree with them in the reception of this dogma. What would the Christian world have thought of John Wesley, had he made his notions of the resurrection of beasts a test of fellowship in his church? Or what would we now think, if some sect should formally declare, that all who reject the doctrine of the visible personal second advent of Jesus are to be excluded from the Church, as rejecters of Christianity? Would not the masses in Christendom instantly stigmatize the procedure as an unwarrantable assumption? Yet the personal second advent of Jesus is a doctrine which, in the estimation of many Bible students, is sustained by tenfold more and plainer Scripture testimony than can be adduced in support of the Tri-personal Trinity. Why, then, should not the Church excommunicate as a heretic the man who denies the doctrine of our Saviour's visible personal advent? Why? Simply because the Scriptures nowhere assert faith in this doctrine to be a condition of Christian character and fellowship. And man has no right to try the faith or character of his brother by any test of his own devising God has specified in his word the tests by which the Church is to try the faith and conduct of those who assume the Christian name. But he has nowhere said that faith in the doctrine of the Tri-personal Trinity is indispensable to the perfection of Christian character; nor has he told us (what the Princeton oracle asserts) that the rejection of this doctrine, "as determined by the faith of the Church, is the rejection of Christianity."

We take our stand upon the point, that God's word nowhere tells us that we must be believers in the Tri-personal Trinity in order to be Christians. The four Gospel histories, in their several reports of the teachings of Jesus, nowhere mention an instance of his requiring faith in this doctrine as a condition of salvation. The Acts of the Apostles, which gives a somewhat full account of the preaching and controversies of our Lord's disciples during the promulgation of Christianity, records no instance of a controversy upon the subject of the Tri-personal Trinity, nor does it intimate that the early preachers of our faith ever mentioned this doctrine in their public discourses. This single fact is fatal to the assumption, that faith in this doctrine is essential to salvation. If this were so, how shall we understand the fact, that all the reported speeches and controversies of the primitive Christian preachers afford no evidence that they were believers in the Tri-personal Trinity? Will it be said there was no occasion for teaching this doctrine in the early age of Christianity? Or that other questions of more consequence demanded the attention of the Apostles? In the name of reason, I ask, what occasion is there for preaching this doctrine now, if the primitive preachers found none? Is it not conceded that the Jews, in the times of Jesus and his Apostles, were not Trinitarians? Is it not also equally evident, that the various heathen nations among whom our Lord's disciples preached the doctrines of Jesus were not believers in the Tri-personal Trinity? How came it, then, to pass, that no controversies upon this subject were excited among them by the preaching of Jesus and his Apostles? How, too, are we to understand the fact, that Jesus and his followers were accustomed to worship with the Jews in their synagogues, — and that for several years, — and to have controversies with them upon various points, and yet

that they never breathed a whisper to them of their grand error respecting the so-called cardinal doctrine of Christianity? Would a Trinitarian preacher have done so? Would an "orthodox" minister, sent as a missionary to a Jewish community, mingle with them for years, join them every Sabbath in their worship, have frequent and daily disputes with them upon points of religious faith, and yet never mention in plain terms the doctrine of the Tri-personal Trinity? The supposition is in the highest degree absurd. And yet this is what Jesus and his disciples did. They mingled with the Jews, worshipped with them, disputed with them, taught them daily for years, and yet the inspired records of those minglings, and worshippings, and disputings give us not a single hint that they ever spoke to their Jewish neighbours and kindred respecting their fundamental error in theology!

Will it be said, that they did speak to them of their error, that it was frequently mentioned to them, that it was the subject of daily disputes, and the burden of frequent admonitions? We request the proof of this strange assertion. We ask our Trinitarian brethren to show us one instance, from the history of our Lord's life and teachings, or from the history of the acts and preachings of the Apostles, in which this doctrine was the subject of direct discourse, or the question in controversy between the inspired teachers and their Jewish or Gentile auditors. According to the estimate in which our "orthodox" brethren hold the doctrine of the Tri-personal Trinity, it should have been — if we consider the character of the Jewish opinions — a prominent and frequent topic of discourse with our Saviour and his Apostles. If this doctrine be, as is claimed, a fundamental in Christianity, and if to reject it be, as the Princeton Reviewer declares, the rejection of Christianity itself, then it was of the last importance that the constituted proclaimers

of our faith should have made it the subject of daily appeals to those whose indifference to it, or whose rejection of it, was endangering their everlasting welfare. We ask them, Did they do it? If they did, show us one instance of it in the Gospels, or in the Acts of the Apostles. We earnestly ask to be shown one instance in which this occurred; and we conceive that we are not making an unreasonable demand of our Trinitarian brethren, unless it be unreasonable to demand what cannot be produced.

Will it still be said, that this doctrine was the subject of the daily instruction of Jesus, but that his historians have chosen to make no record of his discourses and controversies upon it? Why have they chosen to do thus? Why should they fill their several histories with reports of the disputes concerning the comparatively trifling matters of the Jewish ceremonial law, and the traditions of the fathers and elders, while they omit what is claimed to be the grand feature of our faith, nay, the distinguishing characteristic of Christianity?

The Gospel historians give us no intimation that they have omitted any subject upon which Jesus discoursed, either to them or to the Jews. On the contrary, they clearly intimate that they have exercised the greatest care to present a faithful and full report of the teachings of Jesus, or at least of so much of his teaching as the salvation of the human race demands. Thus, the Evangelist John, while he admits that many things were done by Jesus which are not recorded in his Gospel history, implies that so much of the doctrine and works of Jesus is given us as is needful for our salvation. "These things are written," says he, "that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that, believing, ye might have life through his name." John xx. 30, 31.

Some have told us that John produced his Gospel history in order to set forth the doctrine of the Tri-personal Trinity, — in order to establish the Godhead and Supreme Divinity of Jesus Christ as a person distinct from the Father. But the Gospel of John is not such a book as a Trinitarian minister would write for such a purpose; nor are we informed by the Evangelist that he wrote with any such design. Far from it. He wrote, not to prove that Jesus is one of three distinct persons, each of whom is by himself God and Lord, but to convince his readers that Jesus is the Messiah whom the Jewish prophets foretold; that he is the Son of God, and that by believing in him the world might be saved. John, therefore, gives no intimation that any important teaching of Jesus is omitted in his Gospel history.

The testimony of Luke is still more decisive. Luke gives us plainly to understand, that he omitted nothing of all that was taught and performed by Jesus for the salvation of our race. He employs unmistakable terms to assure his reader, that he had made a treatise "concerning all that Jesus did and taught, until the day in which he was taken up."

Now Luke, as we have seen, says not one word in favor of the Tri-personal Trinity. He does not say that Jesus ever taught it, that he had ever heard it, or that it is a fundamental of the Christian religion. Luke does not say (as the Princeton Reviewer says) that "the rejection of this doctrine is the rejection of Christianity, and should be so regarded and treated." No, he says no such thing. He simply says — not one word about the subject!

I venture the assertion, that none of my readers have ever seen an "orthodox" creed or confession of faith, which did not make express mention of the doctrine of the Tri-personal Trinity and its kindred dogmas. So far as my knowledge extends, the various orthodox creeds assign a prom-

inent place to these doctrines, and present them to us as the essential features of Christianity. But in this respect these creeds are very unlike our Apostles' Creed, — the Gospel of Luke.

Has any man, I will ask, ever read a synopsis of Christian doctrines, published by any orthodox church or minister, which did not contain one evident allusion to the doctrines of Total Depravity, the Vicarious Atonement, and the Tripersonal Trinity? Yet the Gospel of Luke is a synopsis of Christian doctrines; and it does not contain one allusion to either of these dogmas.

Or, again, if any "orthodox" minister should write a general view of Christian doctrines, of the size of Luke's Gospel, without one allusion to the sectarian doctrines above mentioned, would not his brethren suspect and denounce him as a heretic? What, then, ought they to think of the orthodoxy of Luke?

The argument founded on the introduction of Luke's Gospel is not yet fully before the reader. Luke gives us to understand, that several defective accounts had been published concerning the things which were "most surely believed" by the primitive Church. It is supposed that Theophilus had derived his knowledge of Christianity from some of these defective narratives. It is evident that Luke was well acquainted both with the defects of these narratives and the imperfection of his friend's knowledge of Christianity. In view of both these things, Luke conceived the design of writing a full account of Christian facts and doctrines, in order that his friend Theophilus might know the "certainty" of the things in which he had been instructed.

I request my readers to give particular attention to the fact, that the defective narratives of Christianity to which Luke alludes were made concerning those things which

were "most surely believed" among the primitive Christians. Now, if the doctrine of the Tri-personal Trinity was one of the things "most surely believed" among the first followers of our Lord, it was probably mentioned as such in the several accounts of Christianity which "many had taken in hand to set forth." If, however, they did not thus mention it, Luke must have marked this omission as a capital defect; a defect which he could by no means fail to supply, when he came to write his own full and accurate statement of Christian doctrines.

Further: If the doctrine of the Tri-personal Trinity was regarded by Luke as a prominent and essential feature of the Christian system, and he knew that his friend Theophilus had not learned to regard it as such, it was his duty, as an honest man and a faithful minister, to give him correct impressions respecting it, by classing it in his treatise among the other doctrines which were "most surely believed" by the Church.

If, however, Theophilus had been instructed to regard the Tri-personal Trinity as one of the doctrines "most surely believed" by the Church, he would naturally expect to find some mention of it in the account of Christianity written for him by his friend Luke. Especially would he expect this after reading his friend's declaration, that he had "perfect understanding of all things (pertaining to Christianity) from the very first," and that his treatise was made "concerning all that Jesus did and taught, until the day in which he was taken up." Suppose, now, when he came to examine the treatise of his friend, Theophilus found in it no allusion to this doctrine, — and he certainly did not, for it contains none, — must he not have concluded that those who had instructed him had either entirely mistaken the teachings of Jesus, or else had very much over-estimated the importance of this

doctrine, seeing that Luke made no allusion to it in his professedly complete account of Christianity?

I will suppose the case of Theophilus to be substantially my own. I will suppose that I have recently heard of the pretensions of Christianity, and am imperfectly acquainted with its peculiar doctrines. I have heard, however, that the doctrine of the Tri-personal Trinity is one of its prominent features, and the Princeton Reviewer tells me that the rejection of this is "the rejection of Christianity."

Fortunately I number among my friends one whom I know to be thoroughly instructed in the Christian religion; one whose Christian knowledge is too profound to permit a mistake, and whose Christian integrity forbids the supposition that he will trifle or deceive. This friend writes me a long letter, in which he professes to acquaint me with all the essentials of the Christian religion; but in which he does not say one word, either directly or indirectly, upon the subject of the Tri-personal Trinity. What must I infer from this fact? Certainly, if I credit my friend's pretensions, I shall be forced to conclude, either that this doctrine is no part of Christianity, or else so unimportant a part that it was not worth while to mention it. Whatever I may or may not conclude, one thing I know, — that no "orthodox" clergyman, and believer in the commonly received doctrine of the Tri-personal Trinity, would write such a letter under such circumstances, and omit to mention this doctrine. Far from it! It would be almost the first subject which he would present. He would frequently allude to it; and would probably say, with the Princeton Reviewer, that the rejection of this doctrine "is the rejection of Christianity, and should be so regarded and treated."

There is another important point in Luke's preface, that we have not yet considered.

Theophilus is informed that this Gospel was written in order that he might know the "certainty" of the things in which he had been instructed.

Admitting, then, that Theophilus had been instructed in the doctrine of the Tri-personal Trinity, it follows that Luke wrote some part of his Gospel in order that Theophilus might know the "certainty" of the doctrine of the Tri-personal Trinity. I should expect, therefore, upon this assumption, to find in Luke's Gospel some express mention of this doctrine. I say express mention, because, when a writer aims to reveal the "certainty" of a doubtful matter, he does not darkly hint out his meaning, he does not employ vague and indeterminate expressions, but selects and uses the plainest terms which the nature of his subject admits. On the supposition that some part of Luke's Gospel was written in order to make known to Theophilus the "certainty" of the Tri-personal Trinity, we must find somewhere in this treatise an unmistakable delineation of this dogma. Where, then, in Luke's Gospel do we find this clear delineation? Nowhere! Where, then, do we find in Luke's Gospel passages which clearly imply this doctrine? Nowhere! Where, then, do we find in Luke's Gospel passages which seem to allude to this doctrine? Nowhere! Where, then, do we find in Luke's Gospel passages which may be construed to refer to this doctrine? Nowhere!

How is the silence of Luke's Gospel, respecting this doctrine, to be accounted for?

Let my reader answer this question for himself. I, who do not believe the Tri-personal Trinity to be a doctrine of Christianity, find no difficulty in accounting for the silence of Luke respecting it.

If the positions assumed in this essay are tenable, I would earnestly ask, By whose authority do churches, professedly

Christian, teach, as essential to human salvation, doctrines which are not once mentioned, apparently not once alluded to, in a full and authentic delineation of Apostolical Christianity?

I would also ask, By what authority do these churches say to one who firmly believes all the doctrines which Luke's account of Christianity contains, and humbly endeavours to perform all the duties which it enjoins, "Stand aside! We do not extend Christian fellowship to you! We do not invite you to our communion-table! You reject the doctrine of the Tri-personal Trinity, and we are determined to 'regard' and 'treat' this as 'the rejection of Christianity' itself"?

How would Theophilus have fared at the hands of our modern orthodoxy? Let us imagine him to appear again in the flesh. He comes among us a faithful disciple of Jesus, and applies to some one of our "Evangelical" denominations for admission to its communion-table and other church privileges. Of course he must be examined respecting his faith. He must, by all means, be asked, "What do you believe?"

We may imagine his reply. "Here," says he, (presenting the Gospel of Luke,) "is a treatise that was written for me by a Christian friend, who was a companion of the Apostles, and fully understood their doctrines. My friend writes, in the preface of this little book, that he had perfect understanding of all things relating to Christianity, from its very commencement. He furthermore states, that he composed this treatise for me, in order that I might know the certainty of those things in which I had been instructed. I have carefully studied the work, and I think I fully understand and believe the doctrines which it contains. And I humbly trust that my daily walk in life is directed by them."

Such a reply would very well suit the character of the most excellent Theophilus under the circumstances which we have imagined. But would the reply be satisfactory?

Let us continue the case supposed. The pastor of the church takes the treatise from the hand of our Theophilus, and, having examined it, thus addresses him: — "The treatise of your friend Luke is excellent, so far as it goes. But I observe that it says nothing respecting the Tri-personal Trinity. Nor does it even once allude to the doctrines of 'Total Depravity,' 'The Vicarious Sufferings of Christ,' 'Justification by Faith alone,' and others equally important. These doctrines are fundamental in Christianity; 'and the rejection of them, as determined by the faith of the Church, is the rejection of Christianity.' What, therefore, is your faith in regard to these doctrines?"

My readers may imagine the remainder of this scene. Theophilus might, indeed, be admitted into the church, because a man of influence and distinction; but it is a solemn truth, that multitudes who, equally with Theophilus, believe the doctrines contained in Luke's account of Christianity, and endeavour faithfully to perform the duties which it enjoins, are branded as heretics and infidels, because they do not believe something more!

I now earnestly request my readers to consider whether a church, which would debar from its communion such a believer as Theophilus, is such a church as existed in the days of the Apostles. Have not our various religious sects (most of whom would refuse fellowship to a Christian who simply believes the doctrines of Luke's Gospel) widely departed from the simplicity of the primitive faith? Now, Christian faith and character is tried by tests of which the Apostles never even dreamed. Now, it is opinion that constitutes orthodoxy; then, it was the life. It is "faith alone" now; it was obedience then.

Luke has informed us, that on a certain occasion Jesus was desired to state the essentials to salvation. The occur-

rence is described in the following words: — "And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, What is written in the law? How readest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live." Luke x. 25–28.

Who that understandingly peruses this passage can say that we are not plainly told what we must do to be saved? If Jesus were now on earth, and a deputation from the several sects should wait upon him, imploring him to decide beyond possibility of doubt what is essential to salvation, they could not frame a more pointed and comprehensive question than this of the lawyer, nor could he reply in plainer terms than he has already used. The question would still be, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" And the answer from Him who is "the same yesterday, today, and for ever" would be, "Obey the law of Love; this do, and thou shalt live."

Why, then, will we not believe? Why will we not learn to regard him as our brother who does the will of God, notwithstanding that his intellect may be unable to digest our mysteries, and his faith too weak to believe our creed? Is it not of such the Apostle speaks, when he commands us to receive him that is weak in the faith, but not to doubtful disputations? (Rom. xiv. 1,) — as if the Apostle foresaw that an age would come when character should be tested by opinion, and the reception of mysteries should be accounted orthodoxy. A speculative faith, an assent to the dogmas of the creed, is not orthodoxy. Love is orthodoxy in the Church of Christ. And he who has not this, though he have all

knowledge and all faith, and understand all mysteries, yet is he, in heaven's estimate, nothing! (1 Cor. xiii. 2.)

He whose heart is principled in love to the Heavenly Father and to his earthly children, is a Christian. If his life be a scene of benevolent deeds and heavenly uses, Jesus will at last receive him, though his name may have been cast out as evil, and fellowship denied him by all the sects who assume to be "orthodox" and "Evangelical."

"He is the best Christian," says Ralph Cudworth, "whose heart beats with the purest pulse towards Heaven; not he whose brain spinneth out the finest cobwebs."

A greater than Cudworth hath said, — "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."

O, I rejoice to believe that multitudes, who have been spurned from earthly churches as heretics and unbelievers, will be joyfully welcomed to the heavenly societies, as friends of God and objects of his everlasting love!

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THE

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By WILLIAM R. ALGER.

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THE CHRISTIAN THEORY OF LIFE.

There are, and can be, only three different theories of life. One of them is, that man can complete his destiny here, in this world. This makes enjoyment the true end and aim of human existence. Whatever form it may assume, this is the essence of the Epicurean philosophy. It is the faith which the world and its evil allies would ever impose upon mankind. It is the natural theory of the senses. It is the first scheme devised by the reasonings of an unrefined selfishness. It is the false conclusion and the hasty induction of ignorance, and a narrow, barren soul. It is outgrown by the development of the holier affections, finer sentiments, profounder wants, and loftier faculties of our nature.

The principal objections to it are these. It can only answer for the young, the vigorous and joyful, to whom the senses are fresh, the world fair, and the founts of pleasure flowing freely; and it is not sufficient for any, even the gayest and most thoughtless. It considers but a part of the facts in the case; takes into account only the mechanical forces and the animal elements, leaving out of view the causal energies and the spiritual portions of our being and

experience. It proposes as the chief end happiness, which no man can be sure to win. It makes its disciples miserable by causing them to forsake high duties and aims for paltry expediencies and hollow pleasures, followed by inevitable retributions. It is the very root and core of selfishness, preventing any self-sacrifice or public beneficence. It is most dangerous, as the secret but fatal path to sin and spiritual ruin; for when virtue is guarded by vice, it is easy to corrupt the sentinel. It is refuted by the existence of the absolute moral law, binding upon all, without regard to consequences. It is disproved by the evidence of immortality, accumulated from all quarters until it overwhelms us with the glorious burden of its proof.

Another theory of life is, that man cannot in this world fulfil any part of his destiny. This makes passive submission his true aim in the present state. All labor is, of course, useless. His only wisdom is to fold his arms in dreamy contemplation of the phenomena he cannot avoid, and, idly waiting a change, say within himself, — "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." This is the substance of various theories of the Oriental mystics, and is also fairly involved in those theological systems extensively prevalent in Christendom, which deny that there is in man self-determining power, — those schemes of faith which deny the necessary continuity of spiritual life, and sever the moral connection of the present with the future. It has its origin from different sources. It is inferred from the false philosophy of fatalism, in which all men sometimes believe, and some men always. It is suggested by the mighty power of evil, the necessary warfare between the good and the bad principles and tendencies in the world. It is seemingly taught by the finiteness and weakness of man, the frequent futility of his desires, and failure of his most arduous labors. It is insinu-

ated by languid indolence, by feebleness and despondency. It is a necessary consequence of the Eastern doctrine of final absorption in the essence of Deity.

On the other hand, it is refuted by the consciousness of freedom, of an inherent causative power, and of a law of obligation. It is instinctively denied by men of a strong and ardent personality, — by ambitious and creative men. It is disproved by the actual existence of those laws of cause and effect with which we are acquainted, involving all the phenomena and experience of immediate and lasting personal retribution and reward; and of which we may avail ourselves or not, as we please, but which, at any rate, rule the world and all it holds. It is overthrown by the consideration that God is the universal Creator, and is almighty; and that, therefore, it is absurd to suppose a world and all its inhabitants to exist for no purpose; for upon the view that man can fulfil no destiny here, this life might just as well all be blotted out. It cannot be so. This life is a fact; God's hand is therefore in it, and it must have a present meaning and a present purpose. It is demolished by the cumulative argument from analogy, showing that throughout the realm of nature there is not a living creature that wastes its life like the idle Hindoo, who maintains that work is folly, as if it were not an ordinance of God, or that torments itself voluntarily, like the self-scourging ascetic, who asserts the essential hostility and eternal opposition of spirit and matter, earth and heaven, as if God did not make them both, and they were not each the complement of the other. And, finally, its falsity is clearly shown by its actual effects. It leads to indifference, stagnation, physical degradation and wretchedness, moral and intellectual death. Compare the principal portions of Asia with those of Europe or America. In the former, age after age passes away with no favorable

change, with but little save monotony and decay. In the latter, each generation beholds a marked improvement and advance. There the dead sea of sloth lies putrid and silent. Here the hurrying river of industry bears health, fertility, and commerce through its course, and pours their tribute into the general mart of nations. Wherever this theory prevails, you will find idleness, debasement, cowardice, torpidity, and despotism. Into this miserable mixture, that has stood so long, only introduce one new truth which it wants, — the Christian doctrine, that man as an individual is immortal, and has a destiny to fulfil in this world preparatory to the one which awaits him in another, — and, at once, it will crystallize, shooting into the sparkling forms of activity, enlightenment, and joy; the elements of its life — to vary the figure — will be changed into nutriment for a higher and clearer life, as when a foreign branch is ingrafted into a tree, the juices from the old roots and trunk are converted into a different and superior fruit.

For the reasons now given, these two theories of life — the one, that man's destiny is personal enjoyment, and that he must finish it in this world; the other, that in this world he can do nothing of any lasting use, but is the victim of an evil fate — must be rejected alike.

There remains but one more theory, and that is the one embodied in Christianity. This declares that the destiny of man is endless; that he can fulfil a portion of it here, and continue it hereafter, for it stretches through eternity and will be fulfilling for ever; that it is the purpose of his being to constitute a conscious and ever-rising portion of the universal order. This work he can commence in the present, carry on in the future, but never finish, since, being a child of God, he is an heir of immortality. The Christian theory is well stated by Paul, when he says, — "For to me to live

is Christ, and to die is gain." That is, to live is useful labor, to die is glorious reward. It may be summed up as follows.

This life on the earth is no delusion, but a substantial reality. It is under the direct superintendence of an Infinite Father, who numbers the hairs of our heads and provides for the little sparrow. Its labors are ennobling and preparatory. Its duties are great, reaching up to heaven, and going down to hell. Its temptation, weariness, and agony shall work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Its mysteries, so dark and unfathomable now, shall be clear hereafter. God never forsakes us, for in him we live and move and have our being. He freely forgives us our sins, whenever we sincerely repent of them, and forsake them. He never ceases to love us, for that would be to hate himself, since we are all his offspring. And to those who love him and keep his commandments, all things shall be seen in the end to have worked together for good. The object of this life is, through toil, trial, sin, sorrow, and their opposites, to develop in man virtue and strength, wisdom and love, those traits and tastes which will fit him for the more exalted and ethereal experience of the spirit-world. Moral freedom, and the consequent exposure to evil and its punishment, are an unavoidable part of the discipline in such a scheme as this, which is the only one fitted to man and truly worthy of him, and is the best possible one for him. Death is but the transition from this state of existence to a higher and freer one, to endure for ever. Where earth and this life set us down, there heaven and immortality will take us up. When man lays his body in the grave, that he himself enters into open relations with a grander sphere is no baseless dream, but a sublime verity. The experience of that untravelled world will, still more

evidently, be directly in the hands of God's good providence. It is a continuation of the soul's life, under new circumstances. It opens a scene and an experience of greater dignity and delight, filling the good with bliss by its divine revelations, purifying and elevating the bad by its remedial retributions. It removes the clogs of the body, the temptations and evils of sense. It leads to spiritual employments of nobler use and purer joy. With the progressive spirits of all the just, it soars and aspires along the line of perfection through endless ages. Therefore, to live is Christ, and to die is gain; this life is well, but the heavenly life is still better.

Such, in plain terms, is a brief outline of the Christian theory of life. The most striking, conclusive evidence of its truth is afforded by the singular precision with which it fits in to the facts, meets the emergencies, and supplies the wants of human nature and mortal experience. Had a wise man, taking all the experience of life as we actually find it, set himself down to invent a theory to interpret the phenomena in all respects, it could not harmonize with the state of the case more completely, or appear more consistent throughout. With the deliberate emphasis of a fixed conviction, we say that the reality of this view is proved by the wonderful exactness of its adaptation to the real wants of men and nations, — the beneficence of its practical workings.

Its doctrines furnish all the needed means of guidance and support in this world, and of salvation for the world to come. The omnipresence of God is a motive to purity, his justice to integrity, his goodness to love, his wisdom and power to trust. And these are just what we need. The immortality of the soul gives dignity to this earthly career, and an explanation to its mystery. That every thing in life

has a moral significance and result, — that man is to work out his own destiny, — that he must stand before the judgment-seat of truth, and receive according to the deeds done in the body, — that we shall meet and know each other again beyond the tomb, — furnishes encouragement under labor, strength against temptation, consolation in sorrow, enabling us in all hours and under all circumstances to thank God and be glad that for us to live is a privilege, and to die is a gain. And these are just what we need. Such is our religion to the individual.

And unto nations, surely, it has been well shown to be the very element of conservation, and the first necessity for any true advancement. What was the cause of the marvellous prosperity and growth of this country? Was it not that here Christianity was established in renewed purity, and clothed with controlling power? Was it not that the founders of the republic were men who feared God and strove to keep his commandments, — honored Christ and tried to walk in his precepts? And now, if their sons forget them, and forsake their ways, will not this land, too, be numbered among the nations that were, and are not? But if they remember God, to deal justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly before him, — if they remember Jesus, to mould their characters and to guide their conduct by his Gospel, — liberty and virtue, hand in hand with peace and plenty, will linger among their descendants as long as the sun shall illuminate our valleys, or the moon sleep upon our hills.

The pagan and the Mohammedan portions of the world give few indications of improvement. Heathen life universally is losing ground, its vigor is waning, it shows symptoms of burning low, of flickering and expiring in its socket. The eyes and the hopes of humanity are fixed upon Christendom, and there alone is true progress made. These

facts are no faint indication that the life-philosophies of heathendom are false, and that they are fated to perish; that Christianity is divinely true, and that it is really destined, as has ever been prophesied and hoped, to number among its subjects all the children of men, stretching its dominion from shore to shore, till its Promulgator shall indeed have a name that is above every other name. The priests and devotees of the religions of Brahma, Zoroaster, Confucius, and Buddha, all sit with their backs to the rising orb, gazing reverently upon a mighty past wherein their systems were triumphant powers. Backwards they point and adore. But the religion of Jesus is the promise and the energy of the future. Its history is the account of human progress. It stands upon impregnable realities, and points to heaven with humble piety and sublime trust. It looks along the vista of coming ages with prophetic exultation, and flings over all the earth this voice of cheer, — "Leave the Past with repentance; improve the Present; press on to conquer the Future for God and for man, for in it the Golden Age lies waiting!" In view of these things, we cannot help believing that the time will come when mankind, discovering their mistakes, and dispersing the darkness in which they have groped, will awake to the folly of any longer forsaking the Truth to follow those false guidances by which they have been so invariably cheated and betrayed. They will finally perceive the madness of any longer turning away from the living fount opened by the Son of God, to be deceived by an empty dream of mysticism, or to fall into the deadly embrace of sensuality, as a caravan, perishing of thirst in the desert, sometimes chases a mocking mirage, or wildly hastens to a well dried up and filled with sand, while near by, in an unheeded oasis, the grass is green, the shade of palms invites, the air is murmurous with the song

of birds, and cold, fresh fountains are flowing on. When the long desired era shall come in which our race accepts the conditions of the Gospel, then, and not till then, will all nations find redemption, full gladness, and repose; then Christianity will be found to be in very truth the wisdom of God and the power of God unto the salvation of the whole world, unto the blessing of every soul that believeth.

The Christian theory of life combines in itself every truth contained in the other theories, at the same time correcting their errors and supplying their deficiencies. Consider if it be not so. There is, for instance, a truth in the theory that man can accomplish his destiny on earth; but the Epicurean exaggerates it into a falsehood. This truth Christianity acknowledges, with the necessary qualifications, saying, Man can fulfil, but not finish, his destiny, in this life, for it is endless. It also admits that happiness is an important and innocent fact in life, only adding, that it is not the object, but the attendant, of labor; that virtue is the end, and happiness the concomitant, of true life.

The Epicurean philosophy, moreover, has a fatal defect. It cannot satisfactorily account for sadness and suffering. It cannot give them any relief. It can see no good in evil. If happiness be the great aim of life, there can be no possible consolation for its deprivation, or for the anguish of misery! This deficiency Christianity supplies, declaring virtue, spiritual growth and strength, to be the end of living, and this object can be effected as well, and often far better, by the ministries of affliction, as by ease and enjoyment; and thus the darkness of melancholy and repining becomes the light of joyful faith.

Again, that whole class of persons who receive this selfish, sensual scheme of life, in any of its forms, are grievously in error concerning the meaning and consequences of death.

Some of them, consistently, regard it as the decay and dissolution of all that lived and moved, the whole man sinking to an eternal sleep in the foul embrace of the grave, — and then farewell for ever to all they have loved and lost, laid now amid loathsome sights and associations, which often intrude to darken the merriest hours. Others, drawing back from the legitimate consequences of their creed, look upon it as the entrance to a dark, unknown world, which the imagination peoples with various images of terror, and torment, and gloomy mystery. And in both cases they shrink from the irrevocable hour with horror. They feel as Claudio felt when, in reply to the statement that a shamed life was hateful, he said, —

> "Ay, but to die, and go we know not where;
> To lie in cold obstruction, and to rot;
> This sensible, warm motion to become
> A kneaded clod; and the delighted spirit
> To bathe in fiery floods, or to reside
> In thrilling regions of thick-ribbed ice;
> To be imprisoned in the viewless winds,
> And blown with restless violence round about
> The pendent world; or to be worse than worst
> Of those that lawless and incertain thoughts
> Imagine howling! — 't is too horrible!
> The weariest and most loathed worldly life
> That age, ache, penury, imprisonment,
> Can lay on nature, is a paradise
> To what we *fear* of death."

All these mistakes, dreadful doubts, and alarms, Christianity, rightly understood, removes, by showing that death is merely the release of the soul from its prison, changing nothing but its circumstances, and improving those, — introducing it to an abode where fairer skies look down, and greener fields look up. It declares that in the Father's house there are many mansions, whither the Saviour has

gone before to prepare a place, that where he is there his followers may be also. It shows that there is strict judgment in the future life; but that friends will meet; and that all will be better off there than here, because the great realities of the universe will be laid bare, and their motives be enabled to work upon us without the impediment and counteraction of these fleshly veils, with their gross corruptions and their wicked proclivities.

A very young disciple of Jesus, a scholar in a Sunday school, who had been taught the Christian doctrine of the future life and reunion of those who loved each other here, lost, in the winter time, a sister, who was taken away in her youth, with her innocence as stainless as the snow which soon covered her grave. One night this little boy saw her in a dream, which he supposed to be real. Upon waking in the morning, he exclaimed, — "O mother, I have *found* our Mary! She lives in a beautiful country; she wears white robes; a crown of diamonds sparkles in her hair, and she trips so happily among the flowers! — I shall see her very often, now, mother." Christianity comes to those who are older and whose hearts are harder than that of the little Sunday-school boy, — comes to those who have plunged in sin and wrestled with doubt and remorse, — comes to us all, bringing a faith and revealing a world which enable us too to *find* again all we have lost, and more, and giving us power, as we look on what is pleasant below, and say, "For to me to live is Christ," to look on what is inviting above, and add, "And to die is gain." Then it is that we feel ourselves already beginning to be the eternal citizens of that spiritual realm on whose confines we are here lingering but for a brief hour.

So in that other theory, which says that this life must pass for nothing, that man can attain nothing until the obstacles

which now impede him, the evils which now enslave him, are removed, there is a fatal deficiency. It cannot furnish any incitement to labor, any encouragement in adversity, any strength in trial, any solace or support in suffering; but must either cause torpor and indifference, or lead to weeping and wailing. If man's labors and woes are the inflictions of demons, or of a blind fate, having no beneficent purpose, working out no useful results for another life, what motive can there be for engaging in voluntary toils, or what heart can any one have for enduring calamities, and courting the pains of self-sacrifice? This tremendous defect Christianity supplies, teaching that all the labor and hardship of this world are the benign appointment of the Father for effecting glorious and everlasting ends not otherwise attainable. They have a spiritual meaning and purpose, and will produce flowers and fruits to bloom and ripen on another shore, beneath another sun, in a happier nature.

Furthermore, the mystic arrives at his theory by a mistaken inference from an evident truth. This truth Christianity accepts, but rectifies its false interpretation. Man cannot, in this world, with all his efforts, attain to more than a small part of the good his nature craves. Now from this the false deduction is made, that here he is the victim of fate and the child of vanity; that he who cannot completely satisfy the true cravings of his nature, and obtain full peace, may indeed have an end and destiny to attain, but to seek it here is folly, his lot is disappointment, he must await the freedom of a better world. According to Christianity, this fact receives a different and more satisfactory explanation. It results, as has been said, from the difference between the absolute destiny of man, and the actual destiny which he can attain in this life. It is explained by the thought, that he can only fulfil a part of his destiny here, the

rest of it filling eternity. The insatiableness of his soul comes from its immortality. A being with an infinite destiny, of course, can never be satisfied with finite attainments. Man's melancholy and his suffering come from his great gifts and freedom, not from his poor endowments and slavery.

In Stoicism, likewise, there is a truth, but it is incomplete. The Stoic's rule for virtue and peace is unwavering, unqualified self-reliance. The Christian perfects this defective formula, saying, Rely on yourself; but as being under the favor of God, as being in harmony with that Will which is the law of the creation, which constitutes the truth of things and determines the salvation of souls. And thus we see that the Gospel account of man contains the truths of the other accounts, remedying their imperfections and exposing their falsehoods.

It cannot be true that this evanescent scene of things is our all, to eat, drink, and be merry forming our real end; for upon that supposition, setting aside the objections already urged, impartial justice would demand that we should all here fare alike. The glaring differences and inequalities in men and their fortune demonstrate their freedom, and argue with all but irresistible force the reality of a future life, we say not to correct the injustice, but to fill up the defectiveness, of this.

Neither can the next view reflect the genuine scope of life; because, overlooking the arguments previously brought forward, if there is a God, of course he made this world, and made it for some purpose, and it must be under his rule; that man should be in the power of a fate different from the Supreme Will, and in consequence be incapable of accomplishing any destiny here, is therefore impossible.

The truth of the theory set forth by Christianity necessa-

rily follows. If this life is not without a final purpose, as the Greek thought; if its object is not punishment, as the Hindoo believes; then it must mean preparation, as the Christian affirms. And that is the reality. Man is immortal. He can now commence the attaining of his destiny, which is growth in wisdom and love, conscious virtue and spiritual power, growth in likeness to God, and prepare himself to continue its fulfilment hereafter under higher auspices. This theory alone is completely satisfactory. It is in perfect unison with all that the best and most gifted men, in their loftiest hours, know, or feel, or wish. And in a state like this, where man feels himself so hampered and hemmed in, it is absolutely necessary to satisfy the yearnings of his limitless affection and thought, and to prevent the prophetic wants of his infinite capabilities and desires from making him the slave of grief and despair. Compare the oldest age and the grandest attainments of man with his spiritual powers and wishes, and how poor, how mean, how transitory a thing is this visible life! In a moment it is here, — it is here, it is gone. We saw an image of it one summer night in a village burial-ground, — a fire-fly flashing for an instant on the headstone of an infant's grave, and then dark. The epitaph on the tomb of a man who reached his threescore years and ten is this: —

> "I came in the morning, — it was spring, and I smiled.
> I walked out at noon, — it was summer, and I was glad.
> I sat me down at even, — it was autumn, and I was sad.
> I laid me down at night, — it was winter, and I slept."

Into this world of the dying and the dead, Christian truth comes, and, revealing the Father's countenance smiling behind every cloud and the light of eternal life beaming beyond every tomb, saves man from an unhappiness comparatively proportioned to the extent and intensity of his

positive consciousness; saves him from a restless sorrow directly graduated by the degrees of his genius, culture, sensibility, heroic denial, and virtue; saves him from being of all creatures the most miserable, and miserable in proportion as he deserves a better fate.

> "For if there be no world on high
> To yield his powers unfettered scope;
> If man be only born to die,
> Whence this inheritance of hope?
> Wherefore to him alone were lent
> Riches that never can be spent?
> Enough, not more, to all the rest,
> For life and happiness was given;
> To man, mysteriously unblest,
> Too much for any state but heaven.
> Is there a God? All nature shows
> There is, — and yet no *mortal* knows:
> The mind that could this truth conceive,
> Which brute sensation never taught,
> No longer to the dust would cleave,
> But *grow* immortal with the thought!"

The three theories of life we have now considered, — first, that the fulfilment of man's destiny is confined to earth; second, that it is impossible here, but reserved for the future; third, that it may be commenced in this world and continued in another, — these three theories, evidently, exhaust the subject. All other schemes are but different forms, modifications, of these, — the Epicurean, the Mystic, the Christian. It is the solemn duty of every man to convince himself which of these views is the true solution of the problem, and according to which of them he is spending his days. Nor let any one believe that only one of them is followed in Christendom. Let no man flatter himself, that, because he rejects one in his faith, he does not obey it in his life, or that, because he receives one in the-

ory, he obeys it in practice. Each numbers its followers in the midst of every community, and all around us.

Disguise it, palliate it, as you may, every man who follows only his natural inclinations, without self-sacrifice, who is ruled by his native impulses and makes self-gratification his chief aim, setting up no objective standard of duty, — every such man lives in accordance with the first theory; his life is irreconcilable with any other.

Again, every one who is governed by outward events and external influences, who has no clear and high spiritual aims reaching through all his plans and labors as their ultimate object, who is negative and a slave, not positive and a king, allowing himself to be borne and directed by the tide of time and circumstance, without subjective stability and rule of intellectual principle and moral purpose, — every such man, whatever be his faith, lives according to the second theory, and cannot justify his conduct upon any other supposition.

Only he who enthrones in his conscience the will of God as the standard of duty which he must in every case obey, who projects the positive force of his soul into useful labors for spiritual ends, striving first and last to overcome the evil he meets, and be the ruler of circumstances, to acquire those pure tastes and sympathies which will fit him for the companionship of heaven, and that indestructible nobility of mind and heart which will ally him to his Creator, — only such can be numbered among the consistent disciples of the third theory, the truth as declared and exemplified by our Lord Jesus Christ. And this is the career to which we are called by all the motives of time, by all the interests of eternity.

Corresponding to these three classes of men, there are three contrasting paths of life, which are the practical results

of the theories by which they are led. Each of them we can trace daily in the actual careers of our acquaintances. Let them be held up as beacons of warning, and as a signal of encouragement to us, to improve, with wisdom, energy, and a sober reference to another world, the privileges of our present being.

The first is a downward path. He who treads it commences his journey, as it were, upon the summit of a long range of hills. He is on the lofty elevation of purity, innocence, and promise. The sunshine of hope is fair. He is surrounded by flattering scenes. But his face is turned downwards. Earthly and infernal fascinations tempt him to descend. He yields and begins to sink. Night and tempest settle down on the hills, but through all that protracted, wearisome night, by the frequent flashes of lightning, you catch glimpses of him, staggering lower and lower down the perilous steeps of indulgence, crime, degradation, weakness, and ruin; stumbling over fall after fall, until, at last, far down at the foot of the valley, the gloomy portals of the grave yawn to receive him, and looking back from its brink up to the distant heights whence he has fallen, — fallen, like Lucifer, son of the morning, — he cries, — "I have *not* spent my life; it is false; I am not old; I have but had a dream, — a long, busy, fearful dream of buying and selling, of enjoying and suffering!" And while he speaks, his miserable dream is over, and he awakes in the midst of the intolerable radiance of eternity. There are such men as this. Let him who would avoid dying as the fool dieth, beware of living as the Epicurean liveth.

The next path reaches onward and away, farther than the eye can see, upon a dead, monotonous level. Its traveller begins his way with the average abilities and prospects of mankind; and from that time forth there is very little varia-

tion. He rises not. Perhaps he falls not. He has no shining virtues, no damning vices. His life is negative, his path a tedious sameness; his lack of faith condemns him already; he buries his talent in a napkin; and his woful deficiencies at the last shall bring upon him a double condemnation. No longings here partly gratified, no powers here partly requisite, teach him a completing immortality. No progress made gives him faith in endless progress, but, on the contrary, his baffled plans, his constant, enduring disappointment, his decaying senses, and the pathetic whispers of things that pass away, make him dread the chill embrace which seems so very like annihilation; and, if he could, he would keep plodding right on for ever just as he is idly doing now. His journey, however, comes to an end; and as the cord that binds body and soul together is about to be sundered, he reviews his life, and exclaims, with a sigh, — "It is a tangled maze of fate, unmeaning and useless all; in which, by turns, I have played and smiled, or toiled and bled, with weariness and tears. O my God, where art thou! O my destiny, shall I ever find thee!" — And then he is where mortal eyes shall not see him more. We have known men to live and die thus. Whosoever would not find such an experience at the goal of earth, let him not, as the Mystic does, neglect the costly hours and squander the golden opportunities that crowd the way to it.

The third path is an aspiring one, leading ever upward, and, like the path of the just, shining brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. It is the strait and narrow way that leadeth unto life. It commences, to reverse the first symbol, at the bottom of a vast chain of mountains, which stretch and tower, one over one, till they are lost in the dome of heaven. The Christian sets out on his journey in the obscure vale at the foot of this long ascent, with lowli-

ness and weakness, yet with unfaltering hope and courage. His gaze is directed upward, towards the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. There, over him, stands a divine figure, clothed with the radiance of resistless beauty and with the power of spotless perfection, — it is his Saviour beckoning to him to come up thither. He fixes his eyes once for all upon the great Forerunner, and begins to ascend, feebly at first, but with growing strength, and every step tells. He surmounts the obstacles that oppose him, rectifies the errors that mislead him, vanquishes the foes that assail him, and scales height after height. By heavenly aid he comes off conqueror from every conflict with doubt, and ignorance, and sin. Still he presses on, and up, over peak succeeding to peak, higher, and yet higher, continually winning new energy, knowledge, and virtue, until, finally, — life's toils completed, the world's experience drained of its meaning and use, the soul's victories won and preparations made, — he stands on the very top of the last eminence of mortal attainment, far above the clouds and the noise of the fretful world, where the stars are just about him and he can step up among the angels. He casts one glance down the long and toilsome path by which he ascended. He says, — "To me to live has been a noble boon, and now to die would be an unspeakable gain, for yonder, — O, there! — all heaven is ready to welcome me home." And then death comes to him, and proves to be one round higher in the ladder of being by which he climbs towards God. Blessed be the name of the Father, who hath revealed his will, and the name of the Son, who hath brought us the glad tidings, for the privilege we all have in our power of treading this path, by a faithful application to practice of the Christian Theory of Life!

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THE FATHER

THE

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By FREDERICK A. FARLEY.

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THE ONLY PROPER OBJECT OF CHRISTIAN WORSHIP.

The difference between Trinitarians and Unitarians, in regard to the object of worship, is a difference, not of accident, not of habit, but deliberately and by design adopted. It is, — we are bound in charity to our Trinitarian brethren to presume, — it is a matter of conviction on their part as much as on ours. Still there is the difference; in itself, important; as a matter of principle or conviction, important; in its practical bearings and influence, very important too. They not only believe in what we deny, namely, a Trinity of persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, each of whom is God, but they worship that Trinity, and they worship interchangeably each of the persons. Enter on any Sunday morning a Protestant Episcopal church, and you will hear the congregation uniting in the following petitions: —

"O God, the Father of Heaven, have mercy upon us, miserable sinners.

"O God, the Son, Redeemer of the world, have mercy upon us, miserable sinners.

"O God, the Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son, have mercy upon us, miserable sinners.

"O holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, three persons and one God, have mercy upon us, miserable sinners."

Ere long the Litany proceeds, addressing the Son, —

"By the mystery of thy holy incarnation; by thy holy nativity and circumcision; by thy baptism, fasting, and temptation:

"Good Lord, deliver us.

"By thine agony and bloody sweat; by thy cross and passion; by thy precious death and burial; by thy glorious resurrection and ascension; and by the coming of the Holy Ghost:

"Good Lord, deliver us."

Almost immediately, in the same Litany, follow these words, — words in which all Christian worshippers can join: —

"We sinners do beseech thee to hear us, O Lord God!"

While it closes thus: —

"Son of God, we beseech thee to hear us!

"O Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world:

"Grant us thy peace!"

I pass by the Roman Catholic Church, since there, the worship of the Trinity, of Christ, of the Virgin Mother of God, of saints, being offered in a dead language, might not be so obvious. But among the Protestant churches, it is common, — I have sometimes thought that it is becoming more common than once, — to worship the Son, to worship Christ, the second person of the Trinity, I will not say exclusively, but preëminently. It is indeed a very striking fact, that, while some of the freest and most acute minds around us are rid, or are fast getting rid, of the harsher and more repulsive features of Calvinism, even though ascriptions to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost may close their

prayers, the prayers themselves are very commonly, and to my own feelings, I must say, most offensively, addressed in great part to Christ; — the tendency seeming but the more direct toward the distinct worship and deification of the Son. We hold all this to be unscriptural error; directly opposed to the instructions and the example of Christ and his Apostles, and, I may add, to the practice of the primitive Church.

I shall proceed to justify this position. In doing so, I am aware that they who are of the like precious faith with myself will be exposed to a wearisome repetition of that which to us is but the alphabet of the pure doctrines of the Gospel. But in many parts of our land no name is more obnoxious than the one which we bear. No efforts are viewed with more disquiet or jealousy among the professedly religious portions of many communities, than those which betoken sympathy with our dissent from the popular belief. I give our brethren of the so-called orthodox denominations all credit for sincerity; for a sincere belief that the holy horror which they express at the upspringing of a place for Unitarian worship in their midst is just that which, as good Christians, they ought to feel. I am wholly unconscious of the slightest hostility towards them of any name. I will be as ready as any one, now and always, to do honor to whatever proofs of a true, living, ever-active piety, of an abiding devotion to the service of God and of man, they may show, however superior to any which we can present. But none the less "earnestly" shall I "contend for the faith once delivered to the saints," — for "the truth as it is in Christ Jesus," — for the pure worship of "his God and our God, his Father and our Father." In "the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free," I will, with whatever strength God has given me, resist and try to strip off the error which has been made even for ages to cling to Christ's holy Gospel, though banded hosts

defend it, and hurl at me their loudest anathema and denunciation. God only grant that it be in a Christian spirit and temper!

Our churches are erected and consecrated to Christian worship. I know that they are designed also for Christian instruction; instruction in the faith, doctrines, hopes, promises, requisitions, sanctions, of the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. But my purpose is to speak in reference to that which I deem their first, great, solemn design, as places of worship; and that worship, specially, specifically, Christian worship; — worship, — the sublimest act of the soul, the loftiest privilege of a dependent spirit. What is worship? It is that by which we escape and pass beyond the visible, the material, the temporal, and enter into communion with the unseen, the spiritual, and the eternal. It is that act in which the noblest powers and affections of our nature are engaged in their highest exercise. It is that privilege, in the devout use of which the fetters of sense, passion, and the world seem to fall off, and the felt presence of God in all the plenitude of his glorious being and attributes to be revealed. I do not say that any house "made with hands," however spacious or magnificent, though it lift its dome or spire to the skies and inclose vast multitudes beneath its vaulted nave and arches, is the only place in which this sublime act may be worthily or acceptably performed, or this lofty privilege enjoyed. The religion in which we rejoice confines worship to no selected spots, — bounds the Infinite by no local temple. Everywhere amid the outspread universe is his dwelling-place; everywhere, therefore, may his presence be sought by the devout heart. Still it is no less true, that the humblest Christian church tells of the nature, dignity, and destiny of man, as the most gorgeous and imposing temple of ancient Greece or Rome never told,

though it stood in most exquisite proportions, covered all over — frieze, architrave, capital — with richest and most elaborate sculpture; and that to the consecrated altar, set up and kept apart for the high uses of Christian worship, the rightly disposed soul loves ever to turn; ay, and yet more and more as time, and years, and the changes of life, and the great lessons of religious experience, roll on and make impressions upon it. Especially will it be so, if *there* a new light first dawned upon the waking spirit, — if there the spell of prejudice was broken, — the hold of the world loosened, — the fountains of repentance opened, — the deep cravings within for light and truth and deliverance met and satisfied, — the love of God, the love of Christ, the love of man, the love of duty, kindled up and inspired, — and the hope of heaven brought in, and made the "sure and steadfast anchor of the soul" amid the trials and storms of life. And all this, we trust and pray, shall yet be felt by multitudes here!

Thus much I say in general, that our churches are erected as places for worship. But specially, specifically, I repeat, for Christian worship. All worship implies an object of worship; and Christian worship, of course, implies that object to which the Christian religion, of Christ himself, its great founder, directs the supreme homage and service of his disciples. The several passages which I shall now cite, taken together, seem overwhelmingly clear as to this point; and taken apart, abundantly so. In the first, the Saviour himself adopts and reiterates, by his own divine authority, that explicit command of the elder dispensation, — "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and *him only* shalt thou serve!" This alone were enough. But in the second, Jesus declares of himself, and originally, the rule of the new dispensation which he had brought in; — "The time is coming, and now

is, when *the true* worshippers shall worship *the* Father." Again I say, this alone were enough. But if any doubt remain upon the question, whether "the Father" be not "the Lord God" of whom in the first text the Saviour had spoken, a third text — words of the inspired Paul, of themselves, too, enough — declares, in opposition to any multiplicity of gods, more or less, "To us there is but one God, the Father." Demonstration itself could scarcely make it clearer, that the Scriptural object of worship is one, undivided, unrivalled, alone, — "the Lord thy God," — "one God," — in one person, "the Father."

Had we only the light of nature, our reason, which, according to a multitude of circumstances, might vary very widely in its suggestions to different individuals or communities, would nevertheless be our guide. But it is not so. We have the light of revelation. That great boon, which the wisest and most spiritual of ancient sages coveted for the race, has been granted to us. The beloved Son of God, the "sanctified and sent" of the Father, "full of grace and truth," has come into the world, and made known the Divine will. To him must we go, for he has "the words of eternal life." Let councils decree what they may, let multitudes and majorities echo, and assent to, and strive to uphold, their decrees, the more urgent the need, the more pressing the call, for every devout and faithful seeker after the truth to go apart and consult for himself the sure "oracles of God"; to go to the Scriptures, in which are recorded our Lord's own directions to his followers; and thus gain the all-supporting assurance, that while he obeys them he is safe and "blessed in his deed."

Now in regard to the Scriptures one thing is most certain, and must be admitted by all, — that, in the Old Testament, but one object of supreme worship, one God in one person,

is revealed; and that most frequent, express, and solemn are its injunctions against worshipping any other being whatsoever. Under the light of the Mosaic dispensation the Jews were living at the advent of Christ; and at that time, as in all ages to this very hour, worshipped accordingly "the Lord God of their fathers," and him only. Did Jesus ever, during his entire ministry, in a single instance, directly or indirectly, change that object of worship, — point worship to any other being, — or declare that that being existed, however mysteriously, in more than one person, whether in three or three thousand? I deny that he did. I deny it utterly, unqualifiedly, and challenge contradiction.

What did he say on the subject? Bear with me while I quote; for notwithstanding the general, the uniform tenor of Scripture be with us, yet our brethren who differ from us hold us, and rightly, to its special language. What, then, I ask, did Christ say of the object of worship? So far from proposing to change the object of worship which Moses had declared, — so far from pointing out defects, either in the declaration of Moses, or in the Jewish belief on this subject, — he repeats to the tempter, just as he was himself entering his public ministry, the very words of the ancient covenant, — "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve!" In confirmation of this, and also that Jesus distinctly taught that the God of the Jews is the God who is still to be worshipped, I remind you of his language to the "woman of Samaria," when, identifying himself with his Jewish countrymen, he said, "We know whom we worship, for salvation is of the Jews." Jesus thus recognized and taught as the only proper object of the supreme homage of his followers, the same and only being whom the Jews had been taught to worship, and of whom this great Lawgiver had commanded, — "Thou shalt worship no other God!"

It is not, however, to be supposed that Jesus did not enlighten the world in regard to the object of worship; upon God's relations to us and ours to him; so as at once to help us in our infirmities when we approach him, and to make the service more attractive and more elevating. Directly the reverse. In the Old Testament, the names or titles usually applied to God are august and awful; implying the grandeur, power, and majesty of the Supreme: — the Almighty, — the God of hosts, — the mighty and terrible God, — the Lord most high. He is described as possessing "terrible majesty"; as surrounded "with clouds and darkness." Sublime beyond that of any uninspired bard, yet profoundly fearful, is that remarkable description of the prophet: — "His brightness was as the light. . . . . Before him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at his feet. He stood, and measured the earth; he beheld, and drove asunder the nations; and the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow. . . . . The mountains saw thee, and they trembled; the overflowing of the water passed by; the deep uttered his voice, and lifted up his hand on high. The sun and the moon stood still in their habitations; at the light of thine arrows they went, and at the shining of thy glittering spear. Thou didst march through the land in indignation; thou didst thresh the heathen in anger!" Now we search in vain among the words of Christ for any thing like this. But what do we find there? One all-endearing, most attractive, profoundly touching image, — that of "the Father"! This, so to speak, is his favorite, constantly recurring title of God. In the brief transcript of the Evangelists of his sayings while on earth, he calls the Being who had sent him on his great mission of love to our race, some twenty-six times, "God"; but some one hundred and thirty-six times, "Father." It is

true, that in the Old Testament God once or twice is called "a Father," while the character of a father as belonging to him is in several passages implied; and that from the whole collection of books comprised in it, as touching representations of the Divine Being and his dealings with men may be gathered as can be conceived. But in the New Testament, and especially in our Lord's teachings, God is ever "the Father"; not by name or title only, but in his views, purposes, and intercourse with mankind. And that "the Father" is always the being and the only being whom he directed his followers to worship, is manifest both from his precepts and his example. It is expressly recorded, that on one occasion the disciples came and asked him to "teach" them "to pray." It is a natural supposition, that, as devout Jews, they were anxious to know whether any new object of prayer was to be presented to them by their master. They had been accustomed to worship the one God in one person, Jehovah; and they knew nothing of any three persons in the Godhead, or of what is now called the Trinity. What, then, did Christ reply? Taking several separate petitions from prayers already familiar to the chosen people, he arranged them in a simple formulary, and directed their minds, as they were wont, to one distinct person or being, as the great object of prayer; — he said unto them, "When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven!" Now here was the very occasion of all others, we should think, upon which he would have seized, had truth required it, to direct them to the new revelation which it is often alleged that he came to make, of one God in three distinct persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; of the Trinity, that is, three persons and one God, as the new object or objects of prayer. But not a word or hint of such a thing. Never, in one instance, did he speak of a Trinity; much less of worshipping a Trinity, or himself, or

the Holy Ghost, but "the Father" only. This endearing name of "Father" is made the special title by which God is to be addressed; and the humblest child of God's grace and blessing is taught, in the simplicity and confidence of a child, to say, "OUR FATHER!"

Need I show how perfectly, how uniformly, the practice of our Lord corresponded to his teaching? Who more devout than Jesus? And yet how always did he pray to "the Father"! When he gave utterance to his gratitude, his language was, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth!" When he felt that miraculous power had been granted to him to recall his friend Lazarus to life, again he said, "Father, I thank thee!" When his soul was "troubled," his prayer was, "Father, glorify thy name!" And when the deadly agony bowed him to the earth, it was, "O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me except I drink it, thy will be done!" Before this, in that longest of his prayers recorded by the beloved Apostle, six times does he address God by the same title. While the soldiers were nailing him to the cross, he prayed, "Father, forgive them!" And the last words which fell from his blessed lips were, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit!"

This is the way in which the Saviour, whom all Christians are commanded to honor and to imitate, prayed. Never, in a single instance, did he pray, or teach to pray, to what in modern phrase is called his divine nature, or to the Holy Ghost; but to the Father always, and to the Father only. "The true worshippers," said he to the Samaritan woman, "the *true* worshippers shall worship the Father." If any thing more pointed or explicit be asked for, let it be remembered that when he was about to "leave the world and go to the Father," he took special care to warn his disciples against praying to himself. They had been wont to look to him

directly and constantly for instruction and aid; "Lord, increase our faith!"—for deliverance in danger; "Lord, save us: we perish!"—"Lord, help me, or I sink!" He had, as God's representative, been at hand to respond to such petitions. Now he was going away; and lest they should suppose that they might continue in the same way to seek his help, and careful to direct their homage and reverence to, and to impress them with a sense of their dependence on, him who had sent him, he expressly forbids them to pray to himself:—"In that day, ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you." How, I ask, how more effectually, had that been his special design, could he have forbidden the worship of any other being besides the Father?

So in "the Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants," there are two remarkable passages, most direct to the point under consideration. John "fell at his feet to worship him." But Jesus said to him, "See thou do it not! I am thy fellow-servant, of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God!" Again did John make the same attempt; and again in the same way was he forbidden.* Thus clearly and explicitly did our Lord Jesus Christ prohibit all worship of himself or of any other being, and direct it to be rendered solely and exclusively to the Father.

After the ascension, the instructions and the practice of the Apostles exactly coincided with those of their Master. Almost immediately after that stupendous event, we find them "lifting up their voices to God with one accord, and saying, Lord, thou art God! which hast made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is." They speak of

* Chap. xix. 10; xxii. 8, 9; see also chap. xiv. 6, 7; xv. 3, 4.

the rulers being "gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ." "For," they add, "of a truth against *thy holy child* Jesus, whom thou hast anointed." Who does not see that they here strictly followed the injunction of Christ, and worshipped his God and Father? Paul, though "caught up to the third heaven," and illumined by special communion with his Master, still "bowed his knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," still gave "thanks always for all things unto God, even the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ," still "thanked God always for the grace of God given by Jesus Christ," and blessed "God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort." So Peter instructs those to whom he writes, to "call on the Father," and blesses "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." James declares of the tongue, "Therewith bless we God, even the Father." John wishes "grace" unto his converts, "from God the Father"; and in the first verse of Jude's Epistle, we read of "God the Father." There is no exception to this mode of teaching or of worship in the Epistles. That "to us, there is but one God, the Father," as expressed by Paul in my text, was the sentiment uppermost and ever cherished in the minds of the writers.

The sentiments and the practice of the early Church corresponded with those of Christ and the Apostles as here exhibited. To this fact we have Trinitarian testimony. One of the most eminent prelates of the English Established Church (Bishop Bull) says,—"In the first and best ages, the churches of Christ directed all their prayers, according to the Scriptures, to God only, through the alone mediation of Christ." * This statement is all the more valuable, because it was

* Dr. S. Clarke's Scriptural Doctrine of the Trinity, p. 435.

incidentally made; and was not intended as testimony, but merely to illustrate the unauthorized prayers of the Romish ritual. It is fully confirmed by Justin Martyr, who flourished about the middle of the second century; and who, although the first to corrupt the pure Christian doctrine in some important particulars, nevertheless declares, — "There are no nations on the earth, in which prayers and thanksgivings are not put up to the Maker and Father of all things, through the name of Jesus who was crucified. . . . . In all our oblations, we bless the Maker of all things, through his Son." Irenæus, some thirty years after Justin, in a prayer, calls upon "the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" as "the only and true God, above whom there is no God." And Origen, some sixty years later still, explicitly says, — "We ought not to pray to any one of those things which are made, nor to Christ himself, but only to the God and Father of all, to whom our Saviour himself prayed, as I observed before, when he teacheth us to pray, not to himself, but to the Father, saying, 'Our Father which art in heaven!'"

Such is the testimony in behalf of the great and solemn duty of confining our supreme homage and worship to one God in one person, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, drawn from the express instructions and the uniform practice of both Christ and his Apostles, and of the early Church. The amount of testimony might easily be swelled from all these sources. In the New Testament, its uniform tenor directs all prayers to be offered to God the Father; while the testimony already cited is enough, and more than enough, to forbid the worship of Christ as God, or the Holy Ghost as God, or a mystical and mysterious Trinity of three persons in the Godhead. The worship of the "One God, the Father," — that august and gracious being whom our Lord himself described in prayer to him as the "only true God," — is the only pure and Scriptural worship.

I am aware of the answer which may have already suggested itself, in the minds of some, to this entire argument, namely, that our Lord Jesus Christ when on earth was worshipped, and that he accepted the worship. But do we at this day need for the first time to learn, that the word rendered "worship" in our English Bible is a word of ambiguous import, the special signification of which is in every case to be gathered from the connection in which it occurs? It sometimes denoted merely civil homage or respect. In the Old Testament (1 Chron. xxix. 20) we read, "And all the congregation fell down and worshipped the Lord and the king." They paid civil homage to the monarch, while they adored their God. Again (2 Sam. ix. 6) we read, that "Mephibosheth *did reverence*" to the King David; which of course meant that he paid him obeisance, or the usual outward tokens of respect. But in another place (Psalm xcv. 6) the word in this rendered "did reverence," is rendered "worship"; — "O, come, let us *worship* the Lord our Maker." Here of course it denoted the homage due only to God. So, in the New Testament, Christ in one of his parables represents the servant as falling down and *worshipping* his lord and master. Again, the word was used to express the homage or reverence due to prophets or messengers of God; as in the book of Daniel (ii. 46) we read, that "Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face and worshipped Daniel." This was the homage rendered and specially due to Christ, as the best beloved and most illustrious prophet and messenger of the Almighty. And finally, the word in question denoted, as in the passage already quoted from the Psalms, that religious service which is due only to God. A similar ambiguity pertained to the English word "worship" at the time when our translation was made; as any reader of the English authors of that age well knows. Christ while on earth *was*

indeed worshipped, and he accepted the worship. Admit it, and what then? He was worshipped, and he accepted the worship, because he knew that it expressed, and was intended to express, only that respect and homage which were due to him in his divine office of the Messiah, as the great representative and messenger of the Most High, — in the glowing language of the ancient Clement, in his epistle to the Corinthians, as "the sceptre of the majesty of God." We have a striking instance of this, recorded by the Evangelist Matthew. Jesus had trod the rough waters of the Galilean sea, and by a word stilled the storm. "Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God!" These words of the awe-struck and wondering disciples show beyond all question what their action meant. They paid him homage, not as God, but as the "Son of God." On another occasion, before referred to, when he perceived that John, overawed by the stupendous revelations which he had made to him, fell at his feet to offer him the homage due only to his Father, of whose unrivalled supremacy he was ever mindful, he exclaimed, "See thou do it not! Worship God!" If any thing more be wanted to prove that Christ, though worshipped, was not worshipped as God, but as his prophet and messenger, let it be remembered how jealous the Jewish people were at that time, and always, of every thing which in the least degree savored of trenching upon the religious worship of Jehovah; and how instantly the popular indignation would have been kindled against any who should have presumed to offer such worship to a man, as they deemed Jesus. Jesus, however, was in some sense worshipped; often, openly, publicly, in the streets of Jerusalem, in the precincts of the Temple, in the very presence of the cavilling Pharisees and his most watchful enemies. And yet, not an

objection was made. Is it credible, that no objection would have been made, — that no special process would have been had, either against those who offered the worship, or Jesus, or both, — promptly, nay, instantly, if it had been understood that the one adored him as Jehovah, or that the other as such accepted the adoration?

This argument has grown to a length altogether beyond my expectation. I alluded in the outset to a practice, common among some other denominations, apparently becoming more common in their pulpits, of paying direct, supreme worship to Christ. I am aware that this practice is well warranted by their creeds; perfectly consistent with them; nay, demanded by them. If Christ, as those creeds assert, be God, then of course he should be worshipped as God. The final appeal, however, is not to those creeds, but to Holy Scripture. I am not, on the one hand, for magnifying the differences which separate us from other Christians; but, on the other, I am none the more for depreciating them. I am for seeing them just as they are, and speaking of them just as they are, both on the score of honest conviction and of a true charity. I believe those differences on some points to be important differences, and on the one under consideration not the least so. On that point, one thing is certain. Either our brethren of the so-called orthodox denominations are wrong, or we are. If, on a sober and careful examination of Scripture, there be no warrant for their worship of Christ, or of the Holy Spirit, or of the Trinity, then they are wrong; and no array of numbers or antiquity, no assumption of authority, however bold or imposing, can prove them right. If, on the contrary, all worship except that of the Father be there expressly forbidden, and that alone as expressly enjoined, then we are right, and no allegation that we are in the minority can prove us wrong. There is no alternative.

I rejoice, however, to think, that the vast body of Trinitarians, after all, have at heart a more Evangelical faith than that which their creeds express; that to them, as to us, the term "Father," in addressing God, comprehends in fact, not the first person of a Trinity only, but all that is involved in the great idea of God, or the Deity. I know, indeed, that in the petitions which I cited before from the Litany of the Protestant Episcopal Church, the worshippers professedly adore "God the Father," "God the Son," and "God the Holy Ghost"; nay, nor only so, but a "holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, three persons and one God." But what portion of the multitudes that from Sabbath to Sabbath hear and respond to the last three of these petitions, have ever seriously reflected upon their import and bearing,— ever independently, and on their accountableness to God, attempted to reconcile them with Scripture,—ever seriously inquired into their origin or authority? To the generally Scriptural worship of the Liturgy of that Church, I gladly bear witness. The prevailing form of address or invocation in its prayers is certainly such; and in most of the prayers themselves, we, as a Christian denomination, can heartily unite. What more Scriptural, for example, than where, in the Collect for the eighteenth Sunday after Trinity, the petition is, "With pure hearts and minds to follow thee, the only God, through Jesus Christ our Lord"? Or, in that for the next Sunday, "Mercifully grant that thy Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts, through Jesus Christ our Lord"? In the Communion Service, too, how admirably is that view of the great object of Christian worship which we hold expressed, and how exactly accordant with Scripture! "It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at *all* times, and in *all* places, give thanks unto thee, O Lord, Holy Father, Almighty God!" And yet the rubric directs that

"these words, *Holy Father*, must be omitted on Trinity Sunday"! Why, why, let me ask, except that for consistency's sake, on the day set apart specially to honor and glorify "the Trinity,"—the Trinity, a thing totally unknown, unheard of, in Scripture,—that peculiar and most attractive title by which Christ addressed and taught his followers to address God, in prayer, and therefore preëminently Scriptural, must be omitted, lest peradventure it seem to conflict with the dogma on which the service of that day is based? In other Trinitarian churches, the prayers in general begin by addressing God, often the Father; but too often they mingle up direct addresses to Christ, and the Holy Spirit, to each of them as God; and close with ascriptions to the three persons of the Trinity, just as contrary to the apostolic practice recorded in Scripture, as the perpetually recurring "Gloria" of the *Roman* and of the *Anglo*-Catholic or Protestant Episcopal Churches.

My special object has not been to refute the dogma of the trinity of persons in the Godhead, but to urge the true Scriptural worship of the Father, and the Father alone, as the one only living and true God; a position fatal, I am well aware, to that widely received and cherished dogma. The worship of the Father! Words cannot express the thrilling joy, the divine peace, the simple and affectionate trust, with which the thought of God as the Father fills the soul which truly receives and faithfully cherishes it! To set apart a particular place for worship may at first seem to imply something merely formal, or at least outward. But when the great object of that worship is revealed, and felt to be the Father; when it is felt that the Infinite Being, he who "inhabiteth eternity," who is "from everlasting to everlasting," who "dwelleth in light inaccessible and full of glory," has condescended so richly to the weakness of our nature, as to

declare himself to be "our Father" and invite us into the "glorious liberty of children," thus binding us to himself in the chords of an unutterable love; how immediately does worship become an inward and heavenly spirit, — the communion of the soul with its great Source, freely, trustfully, affectionately, as the child with its parent, until the work of assimilation is begun and grows, and, by this intercourse of the human with the divine, "we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord."

To this filial, joyous, affectionate worship, ever sacred be our church. In rendering it, most truly shall we honor him, our ever blessed Saviour, who, by revealing the Father, has introduced us to this grateful, delightful service. O, may these walls reared in faith in that Saviour — a faith which cheered, guided, and sanctified the pious dead,* and which

* The allusion is to the Hon. Roger Gerard Van Polanen, who died at Bridgeport, Sept. 9, 1833, aged seventy-six years, having resided in this country thirty-four years. His pastor, the Rev. Wm. Ware, in a sermon preached in the First Congregational Church in Chamber Street, New York, on the Sunday following his death, — of which church Mr. Van Polanen had almost from the first been a most respected member, — says: "If he had a joy at last, it was inspired by the religion of Jesus; if he had a hope, it grew out of the Gospel; if he sued for mercy, it was through the promises of Christ." He was truly a most accomplished man, and exemplary Christian; and his testimony to the truth and paramount worth of the Unitarian view of the Gospel was most decisive. Mr. Ware tells us in the same sermon, that he "said he believed he should still have continued to the end a believer in Christianity, though an unhappy one, if he had never heard of that form of it, which, for the last twenty years of his life, he had embraced and esteemed as his chief possession; but that he could not adequately describe the great accession that had been made to his happiness, after he became fully acquainted with the religion of the New Testament as he last re-

is the joy, and staff, and support of the venerable living — ever testify that, though Christ be not worshipped and adored here, he is most truly, affectionately, reverentially honored! May admiration for his unclouded and spotless righteousness, — gratitude for all that he did and suffered for mankind, — desires and efforts to obey him, as his own, as the great test of love, springing up spontaneously and warming the hearts of the worshippers, — ever keep this house from becoming a place of forms! Here ever be that worship "in spirit and in truth" which is acceptable to God, and conformed to the instructions and example of Christ! And when the venerable founder of this chapel, having, by the blessing of the Father whom she adores, been long permitted to share in its devout services, and enjoy its sacred associations and privileges, shall have been called to rejoin the spirit of him whose memory she would piously embalm in this free-will offering to God, to the religion of the Saviour, and to the spiritual welfare of those who may gather here, — when the voices which have first stirred its echoes shall have long ceased to be heard on earth, — still may humble, penitent, grateful, obedient worshippers of the Father and disciples of his Son continue from generation to generation to tread these courts, until all meet hereafter in a "temple not made with hands"! Amen.

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ccived it. This supplied every want, cleared up every doubt, swept away every cloud." The Chapel, erected by his widow, at the dedication of which the discourse from which this tract has been prepared was delivered, bears his name, in grateful and respectful memory of his faith and virtues.

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REMARKS

ON THE

BOOKS OF JOB, PSALMS, PROVERBS, ECCLESIASTES, AND CANTICLES.

By GEORGE R. NOYES, D. D.

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NOTE.

THIS tract has been prepared, with the author's consent, from the "Introductions" prefixed to Dr. Noyes's "Translations" of Job, the Psalms, the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Canticles. Those portions which are most suited to benefit the general reader have been taken, while the more critical parts of the discussion in each case have been omitted. If the perusal of these selections should lead any one to an acquaintance with the volumes whence they are derived, or with the Translations, by the same hand, of the "Hebrew Prophets," it will effect one purpose contemplated in the present publication.

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REMARKS.

JOB.

The work, which it is the design of the present remarks to illustrate, is in many respects one of the most remarkable productions of any age or country. It is, without doubt, in its general plan, as well as in the rhythmical construction and high poetic character of its language, a work of art. Deep thought and long continued study must have been united with genius in its production. Yet has it, in a much higher degree than most compositions, the freshness of an unstudied effusion of the soul of the author; a soul full of the sublimest conceptions of the Parent of nature and his glorious works, and of true and deep sympathy with all that is great and amiable in the character, and affecting in the condition, of man. The imagination of the author seems to have ranged freely through every part of the universe, and to have enriched itself from almost every department of nature and of art. Whether he attempt to describe the residence of Him "who maintaineth peace in his high places," or "the land of darkness and the shadow of death," the passions and pursuits of man, or the nature and features of the animal creation, the phenomena of the air and the heavens, or the dark operations of the miner, he is ever familiar with his subject, and seems to tell us what our eyes have seen and

our ears have heard. And not more remarkable are the richness and vigor of his imagination than is his power in representing the deep emotions and the tender affections of the soul. Admirable, too, in a poem of so high antiquity, is the skill with which he makes all the delineations of the human heart and all the descriptions of external nature subservient to the illustration of one important moral subject; thus uniting the attributes of the poet and philosopher. It is true, that we miss the perfection of Grecian art in the structure of this work; and his plan required him to set forth the general workings of the human heart, rather than to delineate the nicer shades of human character. It was in harmony with the philosophical design of the work, that his characters should make speeches, rather than converse. Yet no one can fail to perceive the unity of design which pervades the work, and the adaptation of the various parts to its completion.

The first place among the Hebrew poets has usually been assigned to Isaiah. But in what respect the author of the book of Job can be regarded as inferior to any Hebrew poet, or any other poet, unless perhaps we except Shakspeare, I am at a loss to conceive. In comprehensiveness of thought, and richness and strength of imagination, he seems to me to be unsurpassed, and in depth and tenderness of feeling incomparable, when we consider that female loveliness constitutes no part of the interest of the work. But to delineate the excellences and beauties of the book of Job is a task far beyond my capacity. They must be understood and felt, rather than described.

There has been much discussion in former times, in regard to the particular department of poetry and literature under which the book of Job should be classed. Undue importance has, without doubt, been attached to this question; and the scope and spirit of the work have in a degree been lost

sight of, in the eagerness to establish its claim to a particular name, or its place in a particular department of poetical composition. The truth is, that there is nothing that bears an exact resemblance to it in Grecian, Roman, or modern literature. It has something in common, not only with different forms of composition, but with different departments of literature. Those who have given it the appellation of an epic poem have applied to it a term the least suited to its character, and the most unjust to its claims, as a work of art. They have made unimportant circumstances in regard to its form of more consequence than its substantial character, spirit, and design. Nothing can be more evident than the fact, that to excite interest in the personal fortunes of Job, as the hero of a poem, was not the principal design of the writer. Still less was it his design to unfold characteristic traits in the other personages introduced into the work. There is more plausibility in the views of those who have regarded and named the book of Job a dramatic poem. Still, to give the name of a drama or a tragedy to this production is to give it a name from what is incidental to it, rather than from its pervading spirit and prominent design. In fact, to call it a poem of any kind fails to suggest the characteristic feature of the work, though it contains poetry, which, perhaps, has never been surpassed.

If we have regard to the main design, the substance and spirit of the work, we shall refer it to the department of moral or religious philosophy. It contains the moral or religious philosophy of the time when it was produced. It is rather a philosophical religious discussion in a poetical form, than an epic poem or a drama. It is the effusion of the mind and heart of the author upon a moral subject which has agitated the human bosom in every age. Still, the author was a poet, as well as a religious philosopher. In the

mode of presenting the subject to his readers, he aimed, like other poets, to move the human feelings by exhibitions of passion and scenes of distress, and to please the taste by the sublime flights of his imagination. He aimed to give the highest interest to his subject by clothing his thoughts in the loftiest language of poetry, and arranging them in the measured rhythm which is one of the characteristics of Hebrew poetry.

The main subject of this *unique* production is the ways of Providence in regard to the distribution of good and evil in the world, in connection with the doctrine of a righteous retribution in the present life, such as seemed to be contained in the Jewish religion. It sets forth the struggle between faith in the perfect government of God, or in a righteous retribution in the present life, and the various doubts excited in the soul of man, by what it feels or sees of human misery, and by what it knows of the prosperity of the contemners of God. These doubts the author expresses in strong and irreverent language from the lips of Job; while the received doctrine of an earthly retribution, which pervades the Jewish religion, is maintained and reiterated from the personages introduced as the friends of Job.

The subject is one which comes home to men's business and bosoms. Even under the light of Christianity, perhaps there are few who have not in peculiar seasons felt the strife between faith in the perfect government of God, and the various feelings excited in the mind by what they have experienced or witnessed of human suffering. The pains of the innocent, of those who cannot discern their right hand from their left hand, the protracted calamities which are often the lot of the righteous, and the prosperity which often crowns the designs of the wicked, have at times excited wonder, perplexity, and doubt in almost every thinking mind. We,

as Christians, silence our doubts, and confirm our faith, by what experience teaches us of the general wisdom and benevolence of the Creator, by the consideration that affliction comes from the same merciful hand that is the source of all the good that we have ever enjoyed, by the perception of the moral and religious influences of adversity, and especially by the hope of the joy in a better world set before those who endure to the end. The Apostle could say, for the consolation of himself and his fellow-sufferers, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." And every Christian knows that the Captain of his salvation ascended to his throne of glory from the ignominious cross. The cross is the great source of the Christian's consolation. But let us suppose ourselves to be deprived of those sources of consolation which are peculiar to a disciple of Christ, and we may conceive of the state of mind of the author of the book of Job, upon whom the Sun of righteousness had never dawned. Is it strange that the soul of a pious Jew, who lived before "life and immortality were brought to light through the Gospel," should have been agitated by the conflict between such a faith in retribution as his religion seemed to require, and the doubts and murmurings excited by what he felt and saw of the calamities of the righteous, and witnessed of the prosperity of the wicked?

Such being the subject which filled the mind of the author of this book, the question arises, how he has treated it, or what he aimed to accomplish in regard to it. That, in his own view, he had solved all the difficulties which embarrass the understanding in regard to it, is not very probable. But that he proposed to establish some truths in relation to it, as well as to inculcate the duty of entire submission to God, and unreserved faith in him, is, I think, clear. I do not be-

lieve, with De Wette, that he means to leave the subject an utter mystery, and merely to bring man to a helpless consciousness of his ignorance. The most prominent part of the author's design is, indeed, to enforce the duty of unqualified submission to the will of God. A part of it is, also, to illustrate the truth, that moral character is not to be inferred from outward condition; that afflictions are designed as the trial of piety, and that they lead in the end to higher good than would otherwise be obtained, and thus to assert eternal Providence, and justify the ways of God to man. And while he enforces the duty of entire submission, he also plainly intimates that unfounded censures and unkind treatment of a friend in distress are more offensive to the Deity than those expressions of impatience which affliction may wring from the lips of the pious.

The author aims to show that, in the distribution of good and evil in the world, God is sometimes influenced by reasons which man can neither discover nor comprehend, and not solely by the merit or demerit of his creatures; that the righteous are often afflicted, and the wicked prospered; but that this course of Providence is perfectly consistent with wisdom, justice, and goodness in the Deity, though man is unable to discern the reasons of it; that afflictions are often intended as the trials of piety and the means of moral improvement; that man is an incompetent judge of the Divine dispensations; that it is his duty, instead of rashly daring to penetrate, or to censure, the counsels of his Creator, to submit to his will, to reverence his character, and to obey his laws; and that the end will prove the wisdom, as well as the obligation, of such submission, reverence, and obedience.

In this view, I take the whole book, as we now have it, to be genuine. I think this supposition is attended with

the fewest difficulties. Those who discard the speech of Elihu, the twenty-eighth chapter, and part of the twenty-seventh, and the prose introduction and conclusion, must, of course, give an account of it somewhat different.

In order to accomplish the design, or express the views, which I have exhibited, in such a manner that his work should possess the highest interest for his readers, the author employs a form of composition resembling that of the drama. He brings forward a personage, celebrated probably in the traditions of his country, as distinguished for the excellence of his character, and the vicissitudes through which he had passed. In the delineation of the character and fortunes of this personage, he uses the liberty of a poet in stating every thing in extremes, or painting every thing in the broadest colors, that he might thus the better illustrate the moral truth, and accomplish the moral purpose, which he had in view.

He introduces to the reader an inhabitant of the land of Uz, in the northern part of Arabia, equally distinguished by his piety and his prosperity. He was pronounced by the Searcher of hearts an upright and good man; and he was surrounded by a happy family, and was the most wealthy of all the inhabitants of the East.

If virtue and piety could in any case be a security against calamity, then must Job's prosperity have been lasting. Who ever had more reason for expecting continued prosperity, the favor of men, and the smiles of Providence? "But when he looked for good, evil came." A single day produces a complete reverse in his condition, and reduces him from the height of prosperity to the lowest depths of misery. He is stripped of his possessions. His children, a numerous family, for whom he had never forgotten to offer to God a morning sacrifice, are buried under the ruins of their houses, which a hurricane levels with the ground; and

finally, he is afflicted, in his own person, with a most loathsome and dangerous disease. Thus the best man in the world has become the most miserable man in the world.

The reader is made acquainted in the outset with the cause of the afflictions of Job. At an assembly of the sons of God, or the inhabitants of heaven, in the presence of the Governor of the world, an evil spirit, Satan, the adversary in the court of heaven, had come, on his return from an excursion over the earth, to present himself, or to stand in readiness to receive the commands of God. Jehovah puts the question to Satan, whether he had taken notice of the model of human excellence exhibited in the character of his servant Job, and sets forth the praises of the good man in terms so emphatic, as to excite the envy and ill-will of that suspicious accuser of his brethren. Satan intimates that selfishness is the sole motive of Job's obedience; that it was with views of profit, and not from sentiments of reverence toward God, that he paid him an outward service; that if Jehovah should take away the possessions of him whom he believed so faithful, he would at once renounce his service. "Doth Job fear God for naught?" To establish the truth of what he had said in commendation of his servant, Jehovah is represented as giving permission to Satan to put the piety of Job to the test, by taking away at once all his possessions and all his children. But the evil spirit gains no triumph. Job remains true to his allegiance. He sins not even with his lips. — There is yet another assembly of the heavenly spirits, and here the hateful spirit, the disbeliever in human virtue, will have it that it is love of life, the dearest of all possessions to man, which retains Job in his allegiance. Satan therefore is represented as having permission to take from Job all that can be called life except the mere consciousness of existence, and the ability to express his senti-

ments in the condition to which he is reduced, by the infliction of a most loathsome disease. And yet this good man, in this lowest point of depression, is represented as remaining patient so long, that when his wife, whom Satan appears to have spared to him for no good purpose, tempted him to renounce his allegiance to God, he calmly answers, "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" Thus far, he did not sin with his lips.

But when the fame of Job's sufferings had spread abroad, and had drawn around him a company of his friends, who had left their distant homes to sympathize with him in his calamities, he is represented as giving vehement utterance to his long repressed impatience, and pouring out his complaints and doubts in rash language, with which the reader is prepared to sympathize only by the account which has been given of the cause of his afflictions in the introductory chapters.

But the friends of Job, who, of course, are not acquainted with the cause of his sufferings in the occurrences of the heavenly assembly, are thrown into amazement at the condition in which they find their friend, and the expressions uttered by him, whom they had heretofore looked upon as a wise and good man. They are silent while they witness only his dreadful sufferings; but when they hear the vehement and rash complaints which are extorted from him by the severity of his distress, they refrain no longer from expressing their sentiments respecting the cause of his calamities. Thus commences a discussion respecting the causes of human sufferings between Job and his friends. They are represented as holding the doctrine of a strict and perfect retribution in the present life; as maintaining that misery always implies guilt; and hence, instead of bringing him comfort and consolation, they accuse him of having merited his mis-

fortunes by secret wickedness. They exhort him to repentance, as if he were a great sinner, suffering the just punishment of his crimes.

Job repels their insinuations with indignation, and firmly maintains his innocence. He knows not why he suffers. He complains of severe treatment, and asserts that God afflicts equally the righteous and the wicked. His friends are offended at his sentiments, and undertake to vindicate the conduct of the Deity towards him. They repeat with greater asperity their charges of wickedness and impiety, and even go so far as to accuse him of particular crimes. But the more they press their accusations, the more confident is he in his assertions of his innocence, or of the justice of his cause. He avows his conviction that God will one day manifest himself as the vindicator of his character. He appeals to him, as the witness of his sincerity ; denies the constancy, and even the frequency, of his judgments upon wicked men, and boldly asks for an opportunity of pleading his cause with his Creator, confident that he should be acquitted before any righteous tribunal. His friends are reduced to silence, Bildad closing their remarks by a few general maxims respecting the greatness of God and the frailty of man, and Zophar not undertaking to say any thing.

The spirit of Job is somewhat softened by their silence, and he retracts some of the sentiments, which, in the anguish of his spirit, and the heat of controversy, he had inconsiderately uttered. "He proceeds with calm confidence, like a lion among his defeated enemies." He shows that he could speak of the perfections of God, and express all that was true in their positions, in a better style than any of them. He now admits, what before he seemed to deny, that wicked men are often visited by severe punishment. But from his main position he does not retreat, that misery is not always

the consequence of wickedness, and that God has a hidden wisdom in regard to the distribution of happiness and misery, which it is impossible for man to fathom. He then proceeds, with a melting pathos, to describe his present, in contrast with his former condition, and to give a most beautiful picture of his character and life, very pardonable in one of whom the reader knows what has been said by the Governor of the world before the angels of heaven. From this he is led to renewed protestations of his innocence, and of his desire to have his cause tried before the tribunal of his Creator.

In this stage of the discussion, a new disputant is brought forward, probably for the purpose of expressing some thoughts of the author on the design of afflictions, and for the purpose of forming a contrast, in respect to style and manner, with the manifestation of the Deity which follows. Elihu is represented as a young man coming forward with an air of great consequence, though in words he ascribes the burden with which his breast was laboring to the inspiration of God. "Like most inspired men of the same sort, he is assuming, bold, and supercilious." He does, indeed, bring forward some thoughts on the moral influence of afflictions which had not been uttered by the friends of Job, maintaining that, though they may not be the punishment of past offences, nor evidence of guilt, they may operate as preventives of those sins which the best of men sometimes commit, and as a salutary discipline, for the correction of those faults of which a man may be unconscious, until his attention is awakened by adversity. Thus he gives a more rational conjecture than the three friends of Job, in regard to the precise cause of his afflictions, but does not give the true account of it, as it is stated in the introductory chapters. No one thinks it worth while to reply to Elihu.

Human wisdom, the learned wisdom of age, and the un-

biased genius of youth, have now been exhausted upon the subject. At length, therefore, the Supreme Being himself is represented as speaking from the midst of a tempest, and putting an end to the controversy; the dignity of his introduction being rendered more impressive by the almost ludicrous flourishes with which Elihu had entered into the contest.

The Creator decides the controversy in favor of Job. Jehovah does not, however, condescend to explain or vindicate to him the ways of his providence; but with overpowering force convinces him of his inability to fathom the Divine counsels, produces in him a sense of his weakness and ignorance, and leads him to profound repentance on account of the rashness of his language; and thus prepares the way for the final vindication of his faithful servant. In a strain of sublime irony he requests him, who had spoken with such confidence and boldness of the ways of God, to give an explanation of some of the phenomena which were constantly presented to his view; of the nature and structure of the earth, the sea, the light, and the animal kingdom. If he were unable to explain any of the common phenomena of nature, how could he expect to comprehend the secret counsels and moral government of the Author of nature?

But having shown the reasonableness of entire confidence in his unsearchable wisdom, and submission to his darkest dispensations, the Supreme Judge does decide the controversy in favor of Job. He declares that he had spoken that which was right, that is, in maintaining that his misery was not the consequence of his guilt, or that character is not to be inferred from external condition; and that the friends of Job had not spoken that which was right, in condemning him as a wicked man on account of his misery, or in maintaining that suffering always implies guilt. The cause of Job's af-

flictions has already been communicated to the reader in the introductory chapters, namely, that they were appointed as a temporary trial of his virtue, in order to vindicate the judgment of Jehovah concerning him, and to prove against all gainsayers the disinterestedness of his piety. Finally, Jehovah bestows upon Job double the prosperity which distinguished him before his affliction, and thus compensates him for the calamities he had suffered, thereby showing, for the consolation of all who endure affliction, that the end of the good man will show his wisdom.

If the general design of this wonderful production be such as I have described, the question whether Job was a real or a fictitious character, becomes almost too unimportant to be discussed. Truth was illustrated and duty enforced by parable as well as by history, by him who spake as never man spake. Certainly some of the circumstances of the life of Job have the air of fiction, and may have been invented for the promotion of the moral and religious design which we suppose the author to have had chiefly in view.

That the sentiments of Job, and of the different disputants, as well as those which are represented as proceeding from the lips of the Creator, must all be regarded as the effusions of the poet's own mind, is also too plain to need argument. The whole structure and arrangement, thoughts and language, form and substance, of the work must all have proceeded from one and the same mind.

The supposition, that so beautiful and harmonious a whole, every part of which bears the stamp of the highest genius, was the casual production of a man brought to the gates of the grave by a loathsome disease, and of three or four friends who had come to comfort him in his affliction, all of them expressing their thoughts in poetical and measured language; that the Deity was actually heard to speak half an hour from

the midst of a violent storm; and that the consultations in the heavenly world were actual occurrences, is too extravagant to need refutation.

On the other hand, it is against probability, and against analogy, to suppose that no such person as Job ever existed, and that the work has no foundation in fact. The epic and dramatic poets, ancient and modern, have usually chosen historical rather than fictitious personages as their principal characters, as being better adapted to secure the popular sympathy. It is therefore probable that Job was a real character, at least in the same sense in which the Adam and Eve of Paradise Lost were real characters. It is probable that tradition had handed down the name of such a person as Job, distinguished for his piety and his trials, his virtue and its reward. This tradition the author stated and embellished in a manner adapted to promote the chief object of his work.

As to the country of Job, or, in other words, the scene of the poem, there has been a diversity of opinion amongst distinguished scholars. I was formerly inclined to adopt the opinion of those who supposed it to be Idumea. I now think it more probable that the land of Uz was in the northern part of Arabia Deserta, between Palestine, Idumea, and the Euphrates. This country would then be near the Chaldeans and Sabeans, by whose incursions the property of Job is said to have been lost. It is more properly entitled to the appellation of the East than Idumea, which was nearly south of Palestine.

A more interesting question remains to be spoken of, namely, In what country, and in what age, did the author live?

I shall not enter into a discussion of the various conjectures which have been offered in regard to the author of the book. Why should we seek to form an opinion, where there are

absolutely no data on which to ground it? To me it seems highly probable that the author of this incomparable production was one of whom we have no records and no other remains. The opinions of those who have undertaken to name the author are widely diverse. Lowth attributes it to Job himself; Lightfoot and others, to Elihu; some of the Rabbinical writers, as also Kennicott, Michaelis, Dathe, and Good, to Moses; Luther, Grotius, and Doederlein, to Solomon; while Warburton ascribes it to Ezra.

Respecting the age in which the author lived, it might seem, at first view, that some judgment could be formed on internal grounds. But, in consequence of our imperfect acquaintance with the state of civilization, knowledge, opinions, and manners in ancient times, it is difficult to form a satisfactory opinion upon the subject.

Some eminent scholars, as Lowth, Eichhorn, and Ilgen, have supposed that the author lived before the settlement of the Israelites in the land of Canaan. The principal argument in favor of this opinion is the absence of allusions to the institutions, rites, and ceremonies introduced by Moses, and to remarkable events in the history of the Jewish nation. This argument would be more satisfactory, if the characters, as well as the author, of the work had been Hebrews. But as they were Arabians, who had nothing to do with the institutions of Moses, it is plain that a writer of genius would not have been guilty of the absurdity of putting the sentiments of a Jew into the mouth of an Arabian, at least, so far as relates to such tangible matters as institutions, positive laws, ceremonies, and history. To me it seems that the author has manifested abundant evidence of genius and skill in the structure and execution of the work, to account for his not having given to Arabians the obvious peculiarities of Hebrews who lived under the institutions of Moses, at what-

ever period it may have been written. Even if the characters of the book had been Hebrews, the argument under consideration would not have been perfectly conclusive; for, from the nature of the subject, we might have expected as little in it that was Levitical or grossly Jewish, as in the book of Proverbs or Ecclesiastes. The argument for the ante-Mosaic origin of the book seems, therefore, wholly destitute of weight. On the contrary, we find an argument against that opinion in the abstruse nature of its subject, and its speculative and philosophical spirit, which seem to imply a different stage of civilization, and a different state of society, from what we suppose to have existed among the wandering Jews to whom Moses gave the law upon Sinai.

In regard to the age of Solomon, or the period which intervenes between Solomon and the captivity, which is assigned to it by some writers, there is no very decisive objection. Even if the work is supposed to have a national object, or to have been designed for the encouragement and consolation of the Jewish people, as a nation, while in a state of calamity, there are several periods before the captivity, when such a work would have been appropriate; for instance, the period of Habakkuk, whose expostulation with the Deity, and what follows in his prophecy, have a resemblance to the subject and sentiments of the book of Job. There is no necessity, however, for supposing the work to have a national object. If this had been the case, I think it would have been made more distinctly to appear by the author. The subject is one which the vicissitudes of individual experience render as interesting and pertinent in the highest period of national prosperity, as at the lowest point of national depression.

On the whole, it appears to me that there are no data upon which one can form a very confident opinion in regard to the precise age of the book of Job. The latest period as-

signed for it, namely, the time of the captivity at Babylon, appears to me far more probable than the earliest. But I incline to the opinion that it was written some time between the age of Solomon and the captivity.

One more point remains to be considered, namely, the country of the author of Job. For it has been maintained that he was not a Hebrew, but an Arabian, and that the work is a translation from the Arabic.

In opposition to this opinion, it is to be observed, in the first place, that there is no external evidence in favor of it. The work is now found in Hebrew alone, in the collection of what remains of ancient Hebrew literature, — a collection which has been held sacred by the Jews as far back as we can trace their sentiments respecting it. Nor is there any history or tradition which intimates that the work ever existed in a different language. I doubt whether the spurious appendage to the Septuagint translation, worthless as it is, intimates that the book was translated from the Syriac.

It is found, too, in the sacred literature of a people peculiarly proud of their religious prerogatives, and regarding with coldness, jealousy, and often with aversion and hatred, all other nations. It is extremely improbable that any Jew would have had the inclination to transfer the production of a heathen into the Jewish literature, or that he would have been permitted to do it.

In the next place, the work is not only in the Hebrew language, but in the best style of Hebrew composition. The parallelism is uniform and well sustained ; the sentences are pointed ; the style is fresh and vigorous, and, in its general characteristics, bears not the slightest mark of a translation.

But this is not all. It seems to me, that, though Arabian manners and scenes are the superficial characteristics of the

work, yet in its general spirit, and in many less obvious characteristics, the author has manifestly shown himself to be a Hebrew poet. The very subject of the work is just what might have been expected to arrest the attention of a Hebrew philosopher, educated in the religion of Moses. It is similar to that of other Hebrew compositions, as has been observed before. In fact, if we regard the spirit and scope of the work, the remark of De Wette appears not too strong, that it is Hebrew through and through.

On the whole, it appears to me that the internal evidence alone makes it more probable that the author was a Hebrew than that he was a foreigner; and when to this we add the external evidence in favor of this opinion, there seems to be very little room for doubt.

It may seem remarkable that the author of a work, which, for reach of thought, richness of imagination, depth and tenderness of feeling, and skill in its plan and execution, surpasses any production of Hebrew literature which has come down to us, should yet be unknown. But, when we consider the vicissitudes through which the Jewish nation has passed, the wonder is that we retain the work itself.

"But who," says the eloquent Herder, "shall answer our inquiries respecting him to whose meditations we are indebted for this ancient book, this justification of the ways of God to man, and sublime exaltation of humanity, — who has exhibited them, too, in this silent picture, in the fortunes of an humble sufferer, clothed in sackcloth, and sitting in ashes, but fired with the sublime inspirations of his own wisdom? Who shall point us to the grave of him whose soul kindled with these divine conceptions, to whom was vouchsafed such access to the counsels of God, to angels and the souls of men, who embraced in a single glance the heavens and the earth, and who could send forth his living spirit, his poetic

fire, and his human affections, to all that exists, from the land of the shadow of death to the starry firmament, and beyond the stars? No cypress, flourishing in unfading green, marks the place of his rest. With his unuttered name he has consigned to oblivion all that was earthly, and, leaving his book for a memorial below, is engaged in a yet nobler song in that world where the voice of sorrow and mourning is unheard, and where the morning stars sing together.

"Or, if he, the patient sufferer, was here the recorder of his own sufferings, and of his own triumph, of his own wisdom, first victorious in conflict, and then humbled in the dust, how blest have been his afflictions, how amply rewarded his pains! Here, in this book, full of imperishable thought, he still lives, gives utterance to the sorrows of his heart, and extends his triumph over centuries and continents. Not only, according to his wish, did he die in his nest, but a phœnix has sprung forth from his ashes, and from his odorous nest is diffused an incense which gives, and will for ever give, reviving energy to the faint, and strength to the powerless. He has drawn down the heavens to the earth, encamped their hosts invisibly around the bed of languishing, and made the afflictions of the sufferer a spectacle to angels; has taught that God, too, looks with a watchful eye upon his creatures, and exposes them to the trial of their integrity for the maintenance of his own truth, and the promotion of his own glory. 'Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord, (the happy end which the Lord appointed for him,) that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy.'"

In regard to the use of the book of Job, it is hardly necessary, after what has been said of its character and design, to remind the reader that the instruction which it contains is to be derived from its general spirit and design, as a whole, and

not from particular verses or passages. Job was censured by the Deity for the rashness of his language, and his friends were condemned by the same unerring Judge, as not having spoken that which was right. If we regard independent sentences or speeches, those uttered by the friends of Job must be regarded as more consistent with Divine revelation, and more respectful to God, than much of the language of Job. It was in the application of their general maxims that they were wrong; in endeavouring to prove by them that Job was a bad man because he was miserable; or, in general, that misery is a proof of guilt.

THE PSALMS.

The Book of Psalms has been styled by some of the German critics, in allusion to a portion of Grecian literature, The Hebrew Anthology; that is, a collection of the lyric, moral, historical, and elegiac poetry of the Hebrews. Regarded in this light alone, it presents a most interesting subject of literary taste and curiosity. Many of these psalms must have been composed some hundreds of years before the period which is commonly assigned to the origin of the Iliad of Homer. But it is not with them as with many of the productions of the classic Muse, of which the antiquity constitutes their greatest claim upon the attention of the scholar, and of which the subjects possess little or no interest for the world in its manhood. It was the privilege of the Hebrew bards to be employed upon subjects possessing an interest as enduring as the attributes of God and the nature

of dependent man. Their poetry has the deep foundation of eternal truth. It comes, for the most part, in language the most glowing, from the very depths of the soul, rich in sentiments adapted to the soul's most urgent wants. Hence its living spirit, its immortal freshness. Hence its power of reaching the hearts of all men, in all countries and in all ages. Where, in the whole compass of literature, can one find more of the "thoughts that breathe and words that burn" than in the Hebrew Anthology? Then, too, what variety is there in the subjects of these ancient compositions! How diverse the states of heart and fortune that occasioned them! How various the strains of joy, sorrow, gratitude, love, hope, confidence, fear, remorse, and penitence, which come from the sacred lyre! There is scarcely a conceivable state of the human soul, in which one may not repair to the Psalter, as it were to a sympathizing friend.

What a sensation would be produced in the literary world by such a collection of poetry as is presented in the Book of Psalms, could it come recommended by the attraction of novelty! But the truth is, that, in general, the ear is accustomed to these admirable productions, before the mind can comprehend their meaning or feel their beauty; so that, in maturer life, it requires no inconsiderable effort to give them that attention which is necessary for the reception of the impressions they are adapted to impart.

Another obstacle to a proper estimate of the poetry of the Scriptures is the very imperfect translation, and wretched arrangement, in which it has been presented to English readers. Let the lover of poetry imagine what impressions he should receive from the odes of Collins or Gray, cut up into fragments like the verses in the common version of the Bible, and he may comprehend what injustice has been done to the Hebrew poets.

The compositions in the book of Psalms are the productions of various authors and periods, belong to different species of poetry, and possess various degrees of poetic merit. While some of them present the fresh gushes of excited feeling, or the calmer expression of the sublimest sentiments, in the boldest language of poetry, others consist only of moral maxims artificially arranged in a sententious style, or of elaborate and imitative prayers and praises, prepared for the public worship of God.

"The Psalms are lyric, in the proper sense; for with the Hebrews, as in the ancient world generally, song and music were connected, and the titles to most of the Psalms determine their connection with music, though in a manner which is unintelligible to us. These compositions deserve, moreover, the name of lyric, on account of their character as works of taste. The essence of lyric poetry is the immediate expression of feeling; and feeling is the sphere to which most of the Psalms belong. Pain, sorrow, fear, hope, joy, confidence, gratitude, submission to God, every thing that moves and elevates the soul, is expressed in these hymns."

The peculiar religious character of the Psalms, which distinguishes them from the productions of other nations of antiquity, is well worthy of the attention of such as are disposed to doubt the reality of the Jewish revelation. I do not refer to the prophetic character which some of them are supposed to possess, but to the comparative purity and fervor of religious feeling which they manifest; the sublimity and justness of the views of the Deity, and of his government of the world, which they present; and the clear perception of a spiritual good, infinitely to be preferred to any external possession, which is found in them. Let them be considered as the expression and fruit of the principles of the Jewish religion, as they existed in the minds of pious Israelites,

and do they not bear delightful testimony to the reality of the revelation alleged to have been made to the Hebrew nation, and of the peculiar relation which the Most High is said to have sustained towards them?

Let the unbeliever compare the productions of the Hebrew poets with those of the most enlightened periods of Grecian literature. Let him explain how it happened, that, in the most celebrated cities of antiquity, which human reason had adorned with the most splendid trophies of art, whose architecture it is now thought high praise to imitate well, whose sculpture almost gave life to marble, whose poetry has never been surpassed, and whose eloquence has never been equalled, a religion prevailed so absurd and frivolous as to be beneath the contempt of a child at the present day; while in an obscure corner of the world, in a nation in some respects imperfectly civilized, were breathed forth those strains of devotion which now animate the hearts of millions, and are the vehicle of their feelings to the throne of God. Let him say if there be not some ground for the conclusion, that, whilst the corner-stone of the heathen systems of religion was unassisted human reason, that of the Jewish was an immediate revelation from the Father of lights.

The hearts of the pious for ages have felt the value of the Psalms, as helps to devotion; and many have labored for expressions in which to set forth their praise. For its truth, as well as beauty, we quote the following description by Bishop Horne, who yet saw some things in them which modern views of interpretation will not permit us to find.

"In them," says he, "we are instructed to conceive of the subjects of religion aright, and to express the different affections which, when so conceived of, they must excite in our minds. They are, for this purpose, adorned with the

figures, and set off with all the graces, of poetry; and poetry itself is designed yet further to be recommended by the charms of music thus consecrated to the service of God; that so delight may prepare the way for improvement, and pleasure become the handmaid of wisdom, while every turbulent passion is calmed by sacred melody, and the evil spirit is still dispossessed by the harp of the son of Jesse. This little volume, like the paradise of Eden, affords us in perfection, though in miniature, every thing that groweth elsewhere, 'every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food'; and above all, what was there lost, but is here restored, 'the tree of life in the midst of the garden.' That which we read as matter of speculation in the other Scriptures is reduced to practice when we recite it in the Psalms; in those, faith and repentance are described, but in these they are acted; by a perusal of the former we learn how others served God, but by using the latter we serve him ourselves.'

"The hymns of David," says Milman, "excel no less in sublimity and tenderness of expression than in loftiness and purity of religious sentiment. In comparison with them, the sacred poetry of all other nations sinks into mediocrity. They have embodied so exquisitely the universal language of religious emotion, that (a few fierce and vindictive passages excepted, natural in the warrior-poet of a sterner age) they have entered, with unquestioned propriety, into the ritual of the holier and more perfect religion of Christ. The songs, which cheered the solitude of the desert caves of Engedi, or resounded from the voice of the Hebrew people, as they wound along the glens or the hill-sides of Judea, have been repeated for ages in almost every part of the habitable world, in the remotest islands of the ocean, among the forests of America, or the sands of Africa. How many

human hearts have they softened, purified, exalted! Of how many wretched beings have they been the secret consolation! On how many communities have they drawn down the blessings of Divine Providence, by bringing the affections into unison with their deep devotional fervor!"

Luther, in his preface to the Psalter, has the following just remarks: — "A human heart is like a ship on a wild sea, driven by high winds from the four quarters of the world. Here rush fear and anxiety on account of future calamity, there press affliction and sorrow, caused by present evil; here blow hope and confidence in future prosperity, there come security and joy in present good. These high winds teach a man to speak with earnestness, to open his heart, and pour out the bottom of it. For he who is in fear and distress speaks of trouble very differently from one who is in joy; and he who is in joy speaks of joy very differently from one who is in fear. It comes not from the heart, it is said, when a sad man laughs, or a joyful man weeps; that is, the bottom of his heart stands not open, and nothing comes forth. But what is the greater part of the Psalter, but such earnest speech in the midst of high winds of every kind? Where do we find a sweeter voice of joy than in the psalms of thanksgiving and praise? There you look into the heart of all the holy, as into a beautiful garden, as into heaven itself. What delicate, sweet, and lovely flowers are there springing up of all manner of beautiful, joyous thoughts towards God and his goodness! On the other hand, where do you find more profound, mournful, pathetic expressions of sorrow than the plaintive psalms contain? There again you look into the heart of all the holy, as into death, yea, as into the pit of despair. How dark and gloomy is it there, in consequence of all manner of melancholy apprehension of God's displeasure? So also when the

Psalmists speak of fear or hope, they use such words, that no painter could so delineate, and no Cicero or eloquent orator so describe them."

Perhaps the maledictions or imprecations, contained in some of the psalms, may appear inconsistent with the views which have been advanced. I am here willing to admit the unsoundness of some of the explanations which have been given of these imprecations. They cannot all, as has been supposed, be regarded as predictions or denunciations of the punishment which awaits evil-doers. Some of them, at least, are wishes or prayers. See Ps. cxxxvii. 8. But on this subject it should be remembered that,—

1. Many prayers against enemies, contained in the Psalms, are equivalent to prayers for personal safety. They were composed by the head of the nation, in a state of war, when prayer for the destruction of enemies was equivalent to prayer for preservation and success. So Christian ministers are accustomed to pray for success for the arms of their country. So on our national festivals we are accustomed to thank God that he enabled our fathers to overcome their enemies. What is harsh, therefore, in prayers of this kind is incidental to a state of warfare. This explanation will also apply to the psalms composed by David during his persecution by Saul. These prayers should never be used by private Christians with respect to personal enemies.

2. Another consideration is, that those prayers are expressed in the strong language of poetry; and that some of the particular thoughts and expressions, which are connected with the general subject of the prayer, result from an effort for poetic embellishment and effect, rather than from vindictiveness of feeling.

3. The imprecations which are not included in the classes above mentioned are extremely few. I shall not under-

take to reconcile a part of Ps. lxix., cix., and cxxxvii. with the spirit of the Jewish religion, and far less with the spirit of Him who said, "Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven," and who spent his last breath in prayer for his murderers, — "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!" But is it strange that a human soul should be embittered by persecution so as occasionally to utter a sentiment inconsistent with the religion which it professes; that one, who had even spared the life of his deadly enemy when entirely in his power, should, under circumstances of great provocation, express personal feelings inconsistent with his own general character, and with the spirit of his religion? Why should not the *language* of David, as well as his *conduct*, be sometimes inconsistent with what is right? It must be remembered, too, that, in the Jewish religion, the duty of forgiveness had been less insisted on, because the age was not prepared to comprehend it. The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ. There are no imaginable circumstances in which Christians would be justifiable in using the language of the psalms above referred to, or similar language, in their addresses to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The opinion has long since been exploded, that David was the sole author of the Psalms. For the contents of some of them prove that they were written during the captivity at Babylon.

According to the Hebrew inscriptions, which are translated in the common English version of the Scriptures, the authors of the Psalms are Moses, David, Solomon, Asaph, Heman, Ethan, and the sons of Korah.

But great uncertainty rests on these inscriptions, because several of them are inconsistent with the contents of the psalms to which they are prefixed. It is, indeed, not improb-

able that the name of the author was originally prefixed to his composition by his own hand. This is said to have been the practice of the Oriental poets from a very remote age, as it certainly was of several of the Hebrew prophets. If this were the case with respect to the Psalms, it is probable that many of the titles were lost in consequence of the use made of them in public worship, and that their place was afterwards partially supplied by uncertain tradition or mere conjecture. What is certain is, that many of the inscriptions are at undeniable variance with the contents of the psalms to which they are prefixed; and this fact tends to throw discredit on those with which the tenor of the composition sufficiently agrees.

To David the Hebrew titles ascribe seventy-one psalms, — according to some editions, seventy-four. Of these, many contain positive internal evidence of the accuracy of their titles. From his fame as a player upon the harp, when he was invited to play before Saul, from his appellation of the sweet psalmist of Israel, and from the tradition of antiquity, there can be no doubt that he was the author of most of those which are ascribed to him, and of some which have no title. But several of the psalms which bear David's name cannot be his, as they contain allusions to the Babylonian captivity, and similar events belonging to a later age, besides occasional Chaldaisms.

The characteristics of David's poetry are said by Eichhorn to be loveliness and deep feeling. With him agrees so good a judge of poetry as the author of The Pleasures of Hope. "His traits of inspiration are lovely and touching, rather than daring and astonishing. His voice, as a worshipper, has a penetrating accent of human sensibility, varying from plaintive melancholy to luxuriant gladness, and even rising to ecstatic rapture. In grief, his 'heart is melted

like wax, and deep answers to deep, whilst the waters of affliction pass over' him; or his soul is led to the green pastures by the quiet waters, or his religious confidence pours forth the metaphors of a warrior in rich and exulting succession. 'The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer, — my God, my strength, in whom I will trust, — my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.' Some of the sacred writers may excite the imagination more powerfully than David, but none of them appeal more interestingly to the heart. Nor is it in tragic so much as in joyous expression, that I conceive the power of his genius to consist. Its most inspired aspect appears to present itself, when he looks abroad upon the universe with the eye of a poet, and with the breast of a glad and grateful worshipper. When he looks up to the starry firmament, his soul assimilates to the splendor and serenity which he contemplates. This lofty but bland spirit of devotion reigns in the eighth and in the nineteenth psalm. But above all, it expands itself in the hundred and fourth into a minute and diversified picture of the creation. Verse after verse, in that psalm, leads on the mind through the various objects of nature as through a mighty landscape, and the atmosphere of the scene is colored, not with a dim or mystic, but with a clear and warm light of religious feeling. He spreads his sympathies over the face of the world, and rejoices in the power and goodness of its protecting Deity. The impression of that exquisite ode dilates the heart with a pleasure too instinctive and simple to be described."

To Moses only one psalm is ascribed, namely, the ninetieth. In this beautiful elegy there is nothing absolutely inconsistent with the supposition that he was the author of it. Most critics, however, have supposed it to savor of a later age. Grotius remarks, "that it was not composed by him,

but adapted by the author to the circumstances and feelings of Moses, containing sentiments which he might have expressed." The writers of the Talmud ascribe the ten psalms following the ninetieth to Moses; but they do this upon the wholly unfounded supposition, that those psalms which have no title are to be attributed to the author whose name occurs in the next preceding title. The ninety-ninth certainly could not have been written by him, since it contains the name of the prophet Samuel, who was not born till nearly three hundred years after the death of Moses.

Twelve psalms, namely, Ps. l. and lxxiii. – lxxxiii., are ascribed to Asaph, a celebrated Levite, and chief of the choirs of Israel in the time of David. 1 Chron. xvi. 4, 5. That he was a poet, and composed as well as sung, is evident from 2 Chron. xxix. 30: — "Moreover Hezekiah the king and the princes commanded the Levites to sing praise unto the Lord with the words of David, and of Asaph the seer." But he could have been the author of but a small portion of these twelve psalms. Ps. lxxiv., lxxvii., lxxix., lxxx., indisputably belong to the times of the captivity, and several of the rest have with good reason been referred to the same period. They may, however, have been written by a later poet of the same name. Eichhorn, Rosenmüller, and De Wette are of opinion, that, of all the psalms ascribed to Asaph, the contemporary of David, only the fiftieth is decidedly his. This, however, is enough to place him in the number of poets of the very first order. It is marked by a deeper vein of thought, and a loftier tone of sentiment, than any of the compositions of David. In Asaph, the poet and the philosopher are combined. "He was," says Eichhorn, "one of those ancient wise men who felt the insufficiency of external religious usages, and urged the necessity of cultivating virtue and purity of mind." It may well be said of

him, as of the scribe in the New Testament, that he was "not far from the kingdom of God."

Eleven psalms, the forty-second and forty-third being supposed to be one psalm, namely, Ps. xlii.–xlix., and lxxxiv., lxxxv., lxxxvii., and lxxxviii., are ascribed to the sons of Korah, a Levitical family of singers. (1 Chron. vi.) In consequence of the ambiguity of the Hebrew preposition, it has been doubted whether the inscription is intended to designate them as the authors of these psalms, or only as the musicians who were to perform them in the temple. The preposition, however, is the same that denotes authorship in the case of those psalms which are ascribed to David. Heman the Ezrahite, whose name occurs in the title of one of these psalms, may have been one of the sons or descendants of Korah; or the mention of him in the inscription may have arisen from the amalgamation of contradictory titles. The titles were probably given them by some one who had learned from tradition that they were the productions of the sons of Korah, but had not been informed of the names of their respective authors. It is probable that only a few of the most distinguished sons of Korah were concerned in their production. Whatever may be the true explanation of their inscriptions, it is almost universally conceded that the psalms in question were not written by David. In style they differ materially from his. Whoever was their author, they are not unworthy of Asaph. No psalms in the whole collection possess a more permanent interest. None indicate a richer imagination, or a more powerful inspiration. None breathe a bolder, freer spirit of enthusiasm, or contain more sublime and affecting sentiments. Most of them, especially Ps. xlii., xlvi., and lxxxiv., belong to that order of compositions, which, having once passed through the mind, are never forgotten; and which

are most remembered in seasons when much that passes for poetry, being weighed in the balance, is found lighter than vanity.

In the Hebrew titles, the eighty-eighth psalm is ascribed to Heman, and the eighty-ninth to Ethan, both called Ezrahites. The persons intended were, probably, Levitical singers in the time of David, mentioned in 1 Chron. vi. 33, 44. But there can be little doubt that the titles are wrong, and that these psalms belong to a later age than that of David.

To Solomon only two of the psalms are inscribed, namely, the seventy-second and the hundred and twenty-seventh. But these could scarcely have been written by him. It has been suggested that his name was prefixed to the latter, merely because the first verse mentions the building of *a house*, which the author of the title supposed to refer to the temple. Of the seventy-second he seems to be the subject, rather than the author. It is not improbable, however, that some of the psalms were written by Solomon, since, in 1 Kings iv. 32, he is said to have written one thousand and five songs.

The remaining fifty-one psalms have in the Hebrew no titles indicating their authors. And, from what has been said of the Hebrew inscriptions, it follows that the authors of more than half of the psalms are unknown to us. As to the inscriptions which are added in the ancient versions, they are evidently the conjectures of editors and copyists. Modern interpreters, also, have exercised their sagacity in assigning authors to the anonymous psalms. But their conjectures are not worthy of consideration.

Besides the names of the authors, some of the titles indicate the species of the composition; some the occasion and subject of it; some refer to the leader of the choir of

singers; some to the musical instrument to be used; and some to the tune to which the psalm was to be sung. Respecting the origin and antiquity of these titles, the opinion of Rosenmüller is as plausible as any that has been offered.

"I doubt not that all the psalms once had a title containing the name of the author, and in some instances the occasion of the composition, as was the custom of the Arabic, Syriac, and Hebrew poets. But those titles which relate to the air, or the instrument, to which the psalm was to be sung, appear to have proceeded from those who, at various periods, made use of the psalms for public worship. Thus, in 2 Sam. xxii., which contains the eighteenth psalm, there is in the title no mention of the leader of the music. The use of the psalms in public worship affords a reason for the mutilation or loss of the more ancient inscriptions, which mentioned the name of the author and the occasion and subject of the psalm. Those who collected the psalms at different periods undertook to supply the deficiency of titles from their own judgment or fancy, without a due regard to manuscripts, or to the tenor of the psalm. Not a few seem to have been added by commentators, copyists, and even readers. This is proved by the Greek, Syriac, Arabic, Latin, and even by some Hebrew manuscripts. In many cases, probably, a conjecture, placed by a reader in the margin of a manuscript, was in course of time introduced into the text. Hence it may be seen how it happens that many of the psalms are at variance with their titles, and could not have been written by the author to whom they are assigned. We conclude, therefore, that all the Hebrew titles are not to be rashly rejected, nor indiscriminately received. But with the help of sound criticism and interpretation, we must distinguish those which were given

by the poet from those which were added by a later hand.*

The psalms appear to have been collected at different times and by different persons. This is manifest from the division into five books, which is certainly as ancient as the Septuagint version. For this version contains the doxologies which are placed at the end of the first four books, Ps. xli. 13, lxxii. 18 – 20, lxxxix. 52, cvi. 48. "The cause of this division," says Jahn, "may be gathered from the character of the psalms contained in each book. Almost all the psalms of the first book are the work of David. In the second, there are twenty-two of David, one of Asaph, and eight anonymous, ascribed to the Korahites. The third contains one, the eighty-sixth, ascribed to David, and this doubtful; the remainder are partly Asaph's, partly the work of an uncertain author, and partly anonymous. Two only in the fourth book are ascribed to David, and one, the ninetieth, to Moses, the others being anonymous. In the fifth, fifteen are assigned to David, one is ascribed conjecturally to Solomon, and the rest are anonymous. These five books of the Psalms, therefore, are evidently so many different collections, following each other in the order in which they were made. The first person who began the collection put to-

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* In this connection we may say a word of the term *Selah*. Its signification is extremely doubtful. But its use is very generally admitted to have been that of a musical sign for the direction of the singers. But whether it denotes a pause, or slowness of time, or a change of tune, or a repeat, equivalent to the Italian *Da capo*, or a rest for the vocal performers, whilst the musicians were alone to be heard, critics are divided in opinion. The last seems the most probable opinion, namely, that the term denotes *silence!* or *pause!* and that its use was to direct the singers who chanted the notes of the psalm *to pause a little*, while the instruments played an interlude, or symphony.

gether the psalms of David; the second, those psalms of David which it was still in his power to glean, admitting a few others; the third had no psalms of David in view, and when he wished to join his own collection to the former, he added the note at the end of the second book, — 'Here end the psalms of David, the son of Jesse,' lxxii. 20. The fourth collected anonymous psalms, and therefore his book exhibits only one of Moses, the ninetieth, and two of David, the hundred and first and the hundred and third, the latter of which, however, is certainly not his. The last made a collection of whatever sacred poems he could gather; he has, therefore, fifteen of David, and thirty anonymous. This view of the subject readily accounts for the fact, that some psalms contained in an earlier collection again occur in a later, as the fourteenth and fifty-third, the fifty-seventh and hundred and eighth."

The age and the authors of these collections it is impossible to ascertain. But as in the first collection, as well as in the rest, there are some psalms which appear to have been written during the captivity, we may conclude that no one of them was made till the time of the captivity. Some of the others must have been made at different times after the return from Babylon. The last two books are supposed by several critics of eminence to contain psalms referring even to the times of the Maccabees.

In order that the Psalms may be understood in the fulness of their meaning, beauty, and spirit, the most important directions to an English reader are these three.

1. Gain some knowledge of Jewish antiquities. Be so familiar with the history, the manners and customs, the climate and scenery, and the modes of thinking and feeling of the Hebrews, that you may receive such impressions from the sacred poetry as would be received by an enlight-

ened inhabitant of ancient Jerusalem. "It is not enough," says Bishop Lowth, "to be acquainted with the language of this people, their manners, discipline, rites, and ceremonies; we must even investigate their inmost sentiments, the manner and connection of their thoughts; in one word, we must see all things with their eyes, estimate all things by their opinions. We must endeavour as much as possible to read Hebrew as the Hebrews would have read it." For this object, they who have less taste for the simple and immethodical narrative of the sacred historians may be referred to the more elaborate, but popular and interesting, history of the Jews by Milman. For consultation, every one who wishes to understand his Bible should own Jahn's Biblical Archæology, which has been translated in this country.

2. In addition to a general knowledge of the Jewish history and antiquities, it is of great use to ascertain the subject, the occasion, and the author of the psalm. It is true that these points can rarely be discovered with any considerable degree of certainty. But we may be more able to comprehend the sentiment and feel the spirit of a psalm, if we only assign to it an occasion similar to that for which it was composed. At best, however, as has been remarked by Bishop Lowth, "much of the harmony, propriety, and elegance of the sacred poetry must pass unperceived by us, who can only form distant conjectures of the general design, but are totally ignorant of the particular application."

3. It is of the utmost consequence to attend to the characteristics of the language and structure of Hebrew poetry. In order to avoid important errors, the reader of Hebrew poetry must especially keep in mind one of its features, by which it is distinguished from the poetry of the Western world, namely, its boldness in the use of figurative and metaphorical language. Many mistakes have arisen from

interpreting the language of Eastern hyperbole in too strict a sense. As an instance of the kind of language to which I refer, I may mention the eighteenth psalm, from verse ninth to the eighteenth. The simple fact that God aided David and the Israelites in battle is the foundation of this magnificent description. The Supreme Being is represented as interposing in the midst of a tempest, and the tempest itself is described in language extremely hyperbolical. Compare Hab. iii. 3, etc.

As an instance of error arising from the neglect of this characteristic of Hebrew poetry, it may be mentioned that several learned critics have gravely undertaken to explain what habitation David could provide for Jehovah in a single day; that is, before he literally "gave sleep to his eyes, or slumber to his eyelids." From inattention to the same thing, Psalm li. 5 has been made to convey a meaning at war with the attributes of God, with common sense, and with other portions of the sacred volume.

In regard to the construction of Hebrew poetry, so far as *quantity* is concerned, we are entirely ignorant. It is true, that now and then a scholar has arisen, who thought he could perceive the measures of Greek and Latin verse in the productions of the Hebrew poets. But the ears of a vast majority of Hebrew scholars have not been able to detect any such measures in Hebrew poetry, nor to distinguish it from prose, so far as mere sound, or quantity, is concerned. That, in the ancient mode of pronouncing the Hebrew language, such measures existed, it is not necessary to deny. But if the ears of ninety-nine in a hundred are to be trusted, it is impossible to discover them.

What is obvious in the sacred poetry is a division into lines of nearly equal length, or containing nearly the same number of syllables, two of which lines generally form a

verse, or complete a sentence. In several compositions, the initial letters of the successive lines or stanzas follow the order of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet. This is the case with seven of the psalms, four chapters of the Lamentations of Jeremiah, and the last chapter of Proverbs, from the tenth verse to the end.

But the most important feature in the construction of Hebrew verse is as obvious in a translation as in the original. It is what may be called *a rhythm of sentiment.* A period is divided into members, generally two, but sometimes more, which, as it were, balance each other by thought corresponding to thought in repetition, in amplification, in reply, or in contrast.

This feature of Hebrew poetry is called *parallelism.* The illustration of it constitutes the great merit of Dr. Lowth. A more complete view of its varieties has been given by De Wette, in his Introduction to the Psalms, who remarks, that the Hebrew rhythm, namely, the parallelism of members, is nothing more nor less than a rhythmical proportion, and that of the simplest sort, between the larger sections or members of a period, the smaller being neglected. Nothing is more simple than the symmetry, the proportion between two parts of a whole; the proportion between several begins to require more ingenuity and calculation. Here we must forget all the demands which might be made by the delicate, musical ear of the Greeks, so sensitive to the measure of time, or by that of the moderns, so partial to similitude of sound. The Hebrew has neither the one nor the other. His rhythm belonged more to the thought than to the outward form and sound; and he therefore indicated his rhythmical divisions by the divisions of the thought, and the proportion of the rhythmical propositions by that of the subject-matter.

"In this peculiar conformation, or parallelism of the sentences," says Lowth, "I apprehend a considerable part of the Hebrew metre to consist; though it is not improbable that some regard was also paid to the numbers and feet. But of this particular we have at present so little information, that it is utterly impossible to determine whether it were modulated by the ear alone, or according to any settled or definite rules of prosody."

"The nervous simplicity and conciseness of the Hebrew muse," says the poet Campbell, "prevent this parallelism from degenerating into monotony. In repeating the same idea in different words, she seems as if displaying a fine opal, that discovers fresh beauty in every new light to which it is turned. Her amplifications of a given thought are like the echoes of a solemn melody, — her repetitions of it like the landscape reflected in the stream; and whilst her questions and responses give a life-like effect to her compositions, they remind us of the alternate voices in public devotion, to which they were manifestly adapted."

The parallelism affords an important aid in interpretation. For sometimes the meaning of one member of a verse is clear, where that of the other is ambiguous. Thus, in Ps. lv. 15: —

> "May sudden death seize upon them!
> May they go down to the under-world alive!"

the second line is no doubt intended to be synonymous with the first, and is completely explained by it.

The question whether the Psalms were sung by choirs may be distinctly answered in the affirmative, so far as it regards the Temple Psalms, and all which were destined for the public service. It is still the custom in the synagogue for the assembly to respond as a choir to the chant of the chorister; and Miriam with her women formed an alternate

chorus, Ex. xv. By supposing many of the Psalms to have been sung in this way, we shall perceive in them a greater degree of propriety, spirit, and grandeur. Thus, in that of which every other line is, "For his mercy endureth for ever," the repetition of these words might have had an excellent effect, when sung by way of response to a choir which sung the other line, though to a mere reader such repetition may appear tedious.

4. The last direction in regard to the mode of using the Psalms may be given in the language of Dr. Hammond, citing the opinion of the ancient fathers.

"Form thy spirit by the affection of the psalm, saith St. Augustine. If it be the affection of love, enkindle that within thy breast, that thou mayest not speak against thy sense, and knowledge, and conscience, when thou sayest, *I will love thee, O Lord, my strength!* If it be an affection of fear, impress that on thy soul, and be not thyself an insensible anvil to such strokes of divine poetry, which thou chantest out to others, *O, consider this, ye that forget God, lest he pluck you away, and there be none to deliver you.* If it be an affection of desire, which the Psalmist in a holy transportation expresseth, let the same breathe in thee; accounting, as St. Chrysostom minds thee on Psalm xlii., that, when thou recitest these words, *Like as the hart desireth the water-brooks, so longeth my soul after thee, O God!* thou hast sealed a covenant, betrothed and engaged thy soul to God, and must never have a coldness or indifferency to him hereafter. If it be the affection of gratitude, let thy soul be lifted up in praises, come with affections this way inflamed, sensible of the weight of mercies of all kinds, spiritual and temporal. So likewise for the petitory part of the Psalms, let us be always in a posture ready for them, with our spirits minutely prepared to dart them up to heaven. And whatever the affection be, let the heart do what the words signify."

THE PROVERBS.

THAT part of Hebrew literature which has come down to us under the name of the Proverbs of Solomon contains something more than the title indicates. It is not wholly composed of short, sententious maxims and enigmatical propositions, such as commonly receive the name of proverbs, but in part of several didactic discourses of considerable length, containing exhortations to prudence and virtue, warnings against vice and folly, and eulogies upon true wisdom. The first nine chapters belong to the latter species of composition. These discourses, as well as the proper proverbs, are expressed in the peculiar form and language of Hebrew poetry, and without doubt belong to the most flourishing period of Hebrew literature.

The whole collection seems, in the title of the book, to be ascribed to Solomon as the author; and as, in 1 Kings iv. 32, that wise monarch is said to have uttered three thousand proverbs, such has been the received opinion of the Jewish and Christian Churches.

In modern times, however, this opinion has been called in question. The learned and sagacious critic, Grotius, advanced the opinion, that the book of Proverbs was not an original composition of Solomon, but a selection made by him from the proverbs of numerous writers who lived before his time. This opinion has been adopted, and maintained by a variety of arguments, by distinguished critics in modern times. The most important consideration, however, seems to be, that it is not probable, according to the analogy of the literature of other nations, that one man should be the author of so much proverbial wisdom. Such proverbs, it is said, have usually been the result of the general sense and ex-

perience of a community, and the product of a large number of minds. Solomon may have composed a considerable number of proverbial maxims, and other wise men of the nation, before and after him, may have done the same. Now it is not uncommon, when one has become distinguished for wisdom or wit in a nation, that many things should be ascribed to him of which he is not the author. Thus, the Greeks, it is said, ascribed most of their sententious maxims to Pythagoras; the Arabs theirs to Lokman and a few others; the Northern nations theirs to King Odin. In this way the Hebrews may have ascribed their proverbs to their wisest king, Solomon, because it was known of him that he had accomplished more than others in this kind of sententious poetry. Thus the opinion may have been formed, that Solomon was the author of the whole collection of the Hebrew proverbs. But that he was not in a strict sense the author of all the proverbs has been thought probable, not only from the argument before mentioned, but also from the character of some of the maxims, which would come more naturally from persons in a situation in life different from that of a king. Chapter thirtieth is expressly ascribed to another author, namely, to Agur the son of Jakeh.

These arguments, however, are not in the highest degree conclusive. It is very evident that the book of Proverbs is not a mere collection of oral maxims, which were circulated among the people before they were committed to writing, like Freytag's collection of Arabic, or Ray's of English proverbs. The uniformity in the structure and expression of the Proverbs shows that they were the result of elaborate composition. They are all marked by the peculiar characteristic of Hebrew poetry, the parallelism. There is also such a general similarity in the diction and style of composition in these proverbs, that it is difficult to believe, that,

in their present form, they could have been the production of a great many authors. Many of the thoughts may have been in circulation among the people, expressed in a different way. But the style and the poetical form in which they are expressed seem to indicate that very few authors could have had a hand in the composition. From these considerations, and from the historical tradition of the Jews, the more probable conclusion seems to be, that Solomon was the composer of the greater part, at least, of the proverbs ascribed to him. Of others he may have been only the collector.

The book of Proverbs bears evident marks of being composed of several smaller collections, which were made at different times. It may accordingly be divided into five distinct parts.

1. The first part consists of the first nine chapters, and contains, not what according to the common use of language are called proverbs, but connected moral discourses in praise of wisdom, and urging to the practice of virtue, especially the virtue of chastity. The discourse or discourses in these nine chapters probably came from the same author. There seems to be no sufficient reason for rejecting the Jewish tradition that Solomon was the author of this part of the book.

2. The second part begins with chapter x. and extends to chapter xxii. 17. It is of a very different character from the nine preceding chapters. It contains proverbs properly so called; sententious maxims of morality or prudence, contained commonly in single verses, and having no connection with each other. This portion of the book has also a separate title, manifestly indicating that it once formed a collection by itself, independent of the first nine chapters.

3. At chapter xxii. 17, it seems probable that another collection begins. For it is introduced by an exhortation extending through several verses, similar to that in ch. i.

1–6. This third portion extends from chapter xxii. 17 to chapter xxv. It seems to be distinguished from the second part by a greater connection between the verses, and a more negligent use of the parallelism.

4. The fourth part of the book begins with chapter xxv. It has a new title, or preface, setting forth that the proverbs contained in it were collected by men employed by King Hezekiah. It extends to chapter xxx.

5. The fifth portion of the book begins with chapter xxx. and extends to the end. It contains some proverbial maxims of a certain Agur, some advice addressed by his mother to a king called Lemuel, and an alphabetical poem, that is, a poem the lines of which begin with the different letters of the Hebrew alphabet in regular succession, the subject of which is the praises of a good wife.

The book of Proverbs is, in a moral and religious point of view, one of the most valuable portions of the Old Testament. It gives a view of the Jewish religion and morality, as pervading the common life of the Jews, much more favorable than that which we receive from the accounts of the ceremonies and forms which are elsewhere enjoined.

It is true that the religion and morality of the book of Proverbs will not bear a favorable comparison with those of Jesus Christ. Its morality is much less disinterested, being for the most part founded in prudence, rather than in love. Its motives generally are of a much less elevated kind than those which Christianity presents. The idea of the immortality of the soul does not appear to have dawned upon the mind of the author. Prudential motives, founded on a strict earthly retribution, are the principal encouragements to a life of virtue which he presents. This is well, it is true, as far as it goes; for man should ever be reminded of the laws of the Creator, and of the consequences of violating them.

But higher and more disinterested and affectionate motives are necessary for the formation of a perfect character, a character which shall command our highest esteem and love.

But the religion of the book of Proverbs, when compared with that of the Heathen world, appears to the highest advantage. Jehovah is there represented as the one Creator of the universe, the Governor of the world, and the Disposer of human destinies. He is set forth as the First Cause of all things, and man's highest duty is declared to be that of acknowledging in sentiment and practice the power, wisdom, and goodness of Jehovah in the creation and government of mankind. He is represented as holy and just, as knowing every thing which takes place on the earth, as loving, commending, and rewarding piety and virtue, and as abhorring and punishing sin and transgression.

"For the ways of man are before the eyes of Jehovah,
And he weighs well all his paths." Ch. v. 21.

"The eyes of Jehovah are in every place;
They behold the evil and the good." Ch. xv. 3

"The under-world, yea, the region of death, is before Jehovah;
How much more the hearts of the sons of men." Ib. 11.

"All the ways of a man are pure in his own eyes;
But Jehovah weighs the spirit." Ch. xvi. 2.

The incomprehensibility of God is also set forth in this book in striking language. No human powers are capable of comprehending his nature, or understanding his works.

"I have not learned wisdom,
Nor have I the knowledge of the Most Holy.
Who has gone up into heaven and come down?
Who has gathered the wind in his fists?
Who has bound up the waters in a garment?
Who has established all the ends of the earth?
What is his name, and what his son's name, if thou knowest?"
Ch. xxx. 2–4.

The providence of God is represented as ever active and universal. It is over all his works, and nothing takes place which is not in accordance with his will and ordination. It is accomplished by the almighty power of Jehovah, and no mention is made in this book of the instrumentality of angels. Not only the outward fortunes, but the minds, of men, according to it, are under the complete control of Jehovah.

"Trust in Jehovah with all thy heart,
And lean not on thine own understanding;
In all thy ways acknowledge him,
And he will make thy paths plain." Ch. iii. 5, 6.

"To man belongs the preparation of the heart;
But the answer of the tongue is from Jehovah." Ch. xvi. 1.

"Commit thy doings to Jehovah,
And thy purposes shall be established." Ib. 3.

"As streams of water,
So is the heart of the king in the hand of Jehovah;
He turns it whithersoever he will." Ch. xxi. 1.

"It is the blessing of Jehovah that makes rich,
And he adds no sorrow with it." Ch. x. 22.

From this last quotation, Baur takes occasion to remark, that, according to this book, "blessings are granted to God's favorites, independently of any exertions on their part." A more superficial and unfounded remark, or one more inconsistent with the whole tenor of the book, could not have been made. The obvious meaning of the verse is, that, while wealth may be gained by labor by the wicked as well as the righteous, that wealth only *is free from sorrow* which is gained by means which have the approbation and blessing of Jehovah.

In fact, the most prevalent idea in the whole book is that of an exact temporal retribution to men for their good and bad deeds. What inconceivable rashness, then, was it in

Baur to assert the doctrine of the book to be, that blessings were granted to Jehovah's favorites, independent of any exertions on their part!

Another important religious doctrine taught in this book is, that the evils which afflict the righteous man are to be regarded by him as the chastenings of Jehovah, inflicted by God in order to promote the moral improvement of him whom he loves.

> "My son, despise not the correction of Jehovah,
> Nor be impatient under his chastisement!
> For whom Jehovah loves he chastens,
> Even as a father the son in whom he delights." Ch. iii. 11, 12.

But the character of God, as a father, seeking to reclaim the wicked by manifestations of love, is not prominent in this book. The doctrine of Christ on this subject is so far beyond what can be found in the book of Proverbs, or in any part of the Old Testament, as to deserve the appellation of a new doctrine.

The necessity of religion, which is spoken of under the name of the fear of Jehovah, is inculcated in this book in strong and emphatic language, as the beginning of wisdom and the fountain of happiness. Of sacrifices and offerings very little is said. The author insists almost exclusively upon the substantial duties of morality and religion. He seems to rely upon obedience to God's laws, amendment of life, justice, purity, and mercy, as the means of securing the forgiveness and favor of Jehovah, rather than upon formal offerings for sin.

> "To do justice and equity
> Is more acceptable to Jehovah than sacrifice." Ch. xxi. 3.

Such are the views of morality and religion taught in the book of Proverbs; views which may well command our admiration, when we consider when and where they were

taught. Still, we must remember that our duty is now to be learned from Christ, rather than from Solomon. We must examine ourselves by the light of the Sermon on the Mount, rather than by that of the book of Proverbs. A greater than Solomon is here. He is come in his kingdom, and by his laws we are to be judged.

ECCLESIASTES.

Few books of the Old Testament have given rise to greater diversities of opinion than that which is called Ecclesiastes, or the Preacher. In regard to its form and its spirit, its subject and its meaning, its scope and design, its age and author, widely different opinions have been entertained, and defended with confidence and ingenuity. By different critics the author has been regarded as an Epicurean, a Sadducee, a skeptic, a fatalist. By others his chief aim is supposed to be to prove and maintain the doctrines of the immortality of the human soul, and a future state of retribution.

In regard to the class of composition to which the book belongs, it seems to come nearest to what in modern times would be called an ethical or moral essay. I do not, with some writers, regard it as a poem, though parts of it run into the region of poetry, and have a degree of rhythm in the construction. It is, however, written with the freedom of poetry, without regard to logical connection of thought, and without any strict and regular plan kept in view throughout. Not that the work is wholly destitute of method. There is, at any rate, a unity of subject pervading it from beginning

to end; interrupted, it is true, but not destroyed, by digressions and the introduction of moral maxims. The author evidently throws out freely the thoughts which occur to him on a general subject, rather than undertakes to prove any particular point, or to accomplish any precise plan, to which all the parts should have a definite and intimate relation.

If I were to express the subject of the work in a single sentence, which might serve as a title-page to it, I should call it, "THOUGHTS ON THE VANITY OF HUMAN LIFE, INTERSPERSED WITH SUCH MAXIMS OF PRUDENCE, VIRTUE, AND RELIGION, AS WILL HELP A MAN TO MAKE THE BEST OF IT." The main doctrine, or speculative view, of the author is the vanity of human things, that is, of human striving, and of human fortunes and experiences; and his most prominent practical precept is, that men should enjoy the present blessings of life as they come, without anxiety and over-strenuous exertions relating to distant and future good. But there are many observations, and many practical precepts of prudence, virtue, and religion, scattered through the work, as having an independent value, and not having a particular relation to any general plan or design of the author.

In regard to the objectionable sentiments and inconsistencies which have been charged upon the Preacher, it appears to me that much may be said in the way of explanation. One general consideration is, the general character of the composition, which does not aim at metaphysical accuracy of expression, or precise statements of doctrine or principles. The writer throws out thoughts and views, which occur to him as the results of his various experience, without making at the time the limitations and qualifications which a more careful and logical writer would have placed in immediate connection with the former. We are not, therefore, to take all the thoughts which he expresses, while contemplating

things in certain points of view, as his final and settled convictions. We are to consider whether, in the course of his essay, he has not limited, or modified, former statements, if not formally and expressly, yet by solemn additional declarations, which in fact modify the former; whether, in the one case, he has not told us what he thought when considering things under certain aspects, and, in the other, what he believed on the whole, and taking all circumstances into the account; whether, in the one case, he has not been stating facts which perplexed his mind, and, in the other, expressed his habitual faith, to which he clung notwithstanding these facts. It is very doubtful, however, whether he intends to contradict, or has in fact contradicted, any one proposition which he has laid down, in the same sense in which he asserted it.

It is probable that nothing advanced by the Preacher has given greater occasion for the charge of inconsistency or contradiction, than the sentiments which he expresses in relation to a retribution for sin. The difficulty occasioned by his statements in relation to this subject is the greater, if, as seems to be most probable, he had not attained to faith in a life after death, or a future state of retribution. The doctrine of a retribution after death affords the easy solution of the difficulty, which satisfies most readers. But if the writer did not believe in the doctrine, we need a different explanation of the facts. Some of the passages relating to this subject are the following: — In ch. viii. 14, 15, the Preacher says, "There is a vanity which takes place upon the earth, that there are righteous men to whom it happens according to the work of the wicked, and that there are wicked men to whom it happens according to the work of the righteous. I said, This also is vanity. Then I commended joy; because nothing is good for a man, except to eat, and

to drink, and to be joyful; for it is this that abides with him for his labor during the days of his life which God gives him under the sun." So, ch. ix. 2–5, "All things [happen to the righteous] as to all. There is one event to the righteous and to the wicked; to the good, to the clean, and to the unclean; to him that sacrifices, and to him that sacrifices not; as is the good, so is the sinner; he that swears [falsely], as he that fears an oath. This is an evil among all things which take place under the sun, that there is one event to all; therefore also the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart while they live, and afterward they go down to the dead. For who is there that is excepted? With all the living there is hope; for a living dog is better than a dead lion. For the living know that they must die; but the dead know not any thing, and there is no more to them any advantage; for their memory is forgotten. Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a cheerful heart." Other passages of similar import might be quoted, but these are sufficient.

On the other hand, we read, in ch. iii. 17, "Then I said in my heart, God will judge the righteous and the wicked. For there shall be a time for every employment and for every work [to be judged]." And in ch. viii. 12, 13, "But though a sinner do evil a hundred times, and have his days prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, that fear before him. But it shall not be well with the wicked; he shall be like a shadow, and shall not prolong his days; because he fears not before God." And in ch. xi. 9, "Know that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment." And in ch. xii. 14, "For God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." See, also, ch. v. 3–7; vii. 17, 18; viii. 8.

Now the first remark which may be made upon these seeming inconsistencies respecting the doctrine of retribution for sin is, that they are not peculiar to the book of Ecclesiastes. We find similar representations in the Psalms, in the book of Job, and in Habakkuk. See Ps. lxxiii.; Hab. i. 12 – 17. The book of Job contains strong representations of the prosperity of the wicked and the misery of the righteous; which representations the writer reconciles with faith in a righteous retribution for sin, and that, too, in the present world. That these representations are generally put into the mouths of different speakers is a mere matter of form, adopted by the author in order to present different views of the subject. But this is not always the case. Job himself is made to utter sentiments apparently so diverse in chapters xxiv. and xxvii., that some critics have made arbitrary alterations in the text to meet the supposed difficulty. It is probable, therefore, that the alleged inconsistency in the case of the Preacher is to be explained in the same way as the passages referred to in the Psalms, Job, and Habakkuk.

Secondly, it is to be remarked, that the facts asserted by the Preacher are, to a considerable extent at least, what we all know to be true. Physical events do take place according to physical laws. The sun rises on the evil and the good, and the rain descends on the just and the unjust. When a tempest rages, it does not spare the fields and dwellings of the righteous. When the pestilence lays waste, it does not pass by the innocent and devout. If there be any exaggeration in the Preacher's statements, if he places the difficulties which occur to his mind respecting the moral government of God in a very strong light, this is to be referred to the bold, unqualified way in which he expresses all his thoughts, and to his desire to give a striking illustration of the vanity of human things. He does not make his statements as de-

ciding the question against a retribution for sin, but only as presenting difficulties. He is expressing thoughts which occurred to his mind at the time, not giving his view on the whole. He is complaining that the wicked escape for a long time, though he may yet have believed that judgment would at some time overtake them. Notwithstanding the extent to which all things happen alike to all, he may have believed in the doctrine of a righteous retribution, as established by the general consequences of human actions, as required by the justice of God, and as certainly contained in the religion of his nation.

For it will be conceded by all, that the doctrine of a righteous retribution in the present life is the doctrine of the Old Testament. It is found throughout the Pentateuch and the book of Proverbs. It was firmly held by the Psalmists, by Habakkuk, and the author of Job, notwithstanding the difficulties presented by the prosperity of the wicked and the sufferings of the righteous. Their faith in retribution was not shaken by their observation, that "the ungodly prospered in the world and increased in riches," while the righteous "have been smitten every day, and chastened every morning." They had faith, that, though "judgment against an evil work was not executed speedily," the wicked "stood in slippery places," and that in some way, and at some time, the ways of transgressors would be found to be hard, and that, too, in this world. Why, then, should we seek a solution of the difficulty in Ecclesiastes different from that which is applicable to other writers of the Old Testament? What more is necessary, than to suppose that in the one class of passages the Preacher states his faith, and the faith of his nation, in the doctrine of retribution, whilst in the other class he only states facts in regard to the temporary distribution of good and evil in the world, especially in

regard to the occurrence of the same physical events to all without distinction of character, which, though they perplex his mind and occasion embarrassment, and impress it with the vanity of human things, yet do not shake his faith? In the one case, he declares what is true on the whole, in the long run, and all things considered, and what may be expected from the justice of the Almighty. In the other, he is stating what fell under his own observation and experience in a given time, and which occasioned him so much embarrassment, that he exclaims,—"Then I saw the whole work of God, that a man cannot comprehend that which takes place under the sun; how much soever he may labor to search it out, yet shall he not comprehend it; yea, though a wise man resolve to know it, yet shall he not be able to comprehend it."

We Christians believe in the moral government of God, and in a retribution for sin to a certain extent in the present world, though we are sometimes inclined to wonder that a surer and a swifter punishment does not overtake evil-doers. We cannot deny the facts which the Preacher has stated, and which, at first view, seem inconsistent with his doctrines, however we might qualify the statement of them. We think we bring those facts into more perfect harmony with our faith in the moral government of God, by extending the retributions of sin into the future world. The mind of the Preacher may have been more embarrassed than that of the Christian. It would be strange, if it were not. He may not have been so able to account for the phenomena of human life, as the Christian to whom life and immortality have been brought to light. But his faith was not shaken, though his understanding was perplexed. He admits, like an honest man, all the difficulties of the subject, and believes still, that, though for a time the sinner goes unpunished, yet that at some time, and in some way, he is brought into judgment.

It is true that the Preacher does not limit and qualify all his statements, like one who weighs all his words with the accuracy of Bishop Butler. It is rather his manner to give bold, unqualified, and, as it were, paradoxical statements of the results of his experience and observation, as well as of the course of conduct which he thinks it advisable to pursue. But if we make due allowance for the style of the writer in this respect, and for his use of figurative and hyperbolical language, we are not compelled to believe that he has contradicted himself, or that doubt on the subject of retribution was the prevailing habit of his mind.

It may appear singular to some readers that I have spent so much time on this topic, when the supposition, that the writer believed in a state of retribution after death, would afford so obvious a solution of the difficulty in question. But it appears to my mind most probable that the Preacher had not faith in a future life, much less in a future state of retribution. It appears to me, that he has himself intimated that this was not the way in which he viewed the subject. Thus, in ch. viii. 13, he says, "But it shall not be well with the wicked, neither shall he prolong his days, which are as a shadow; because he fears not before God." I think, too, that if he had had faith in the doctrine of a retribution after death, it would have pervaded the whole book, and given an entirely different complexion to it. The practical inferences, or recommendations, especially, which the Preacher makes in view of the vanity, perplexities, and shortness of life, would, it seems to me, have been entirely different, if he had entertained the Christian faith in immortality and retribution. See ch. ii. 24; iii. 12, 13, 22; v. 18–20; vii. 14; viii. 15; ix. 7–10, &c. I have already mentioned the probability, that no other solution of the difficulties in Ecclesiastes is to be sought, than that which applies to the book of Job, to Habakkuk, and to the Psalms.

With regard to the Preacher's alleged tendency to fatalism, it may be admitted that the sentiments of chapters first and second, and of such passages as ch. iii. 14, vi. 10, vii. 13, if taken by themselves, and pursued to their consequences, without regard to other statements and sentiments contained in the book, may seem to give some plausibility to the charge. But what author is not liable to the same charge, if treated in the same way? Would not the doctrine of our Saviour and of the Apostle Paul, respecting the dependence of all things upon God and the unlimited extent of the Divine providence, be liable to the same charge? The Preacher has amply qualified his statements respecting the impotency of human exertion, and the inevitable course of events, and the dependence of all things upon God, by the doctrine of a righteous retribution, and by various passages, which imply faith in human freedom. In respect to this point, as to others, we must keep in mind the characteristic of the writer to give a strong, I might almost say paradoxical, view of the condition of human things, which is immediately before his mind. The necessary limitations and qualifications are not given at the time.

It may, however, be admitted, that the author gives a stronger view than any other Biblical writer of the circumscribed limits of human efforts, and their subjection to a higher, established, inevitable course of things, or ordination of Divine providence, which man can neither resist nor control. See ch. iii. 1 – 15, especially 14, 15; vi. 10; vii. 13; ix. 1, 11. The great theme of the book, the vanity of human things, is made to consist chiefly in the vanity of human effort or striving, as being either wholly fruitless, or fruitless in relation to its express object. But if we interpret the language of the author by other parts of the book, we must come to the conclusion, that he by no means designs to en-

courage inactivity or neglect of our powers, but only an anxious, ambitious, and over-strenuous pursuit of future and distant good. If, in one passage, he asks, "What profit has a man of all his labor?" he says, in another, "Whatever thy hand finds to do, do it with thy might." However strong is the writer's representation of the influence of a higher power over his concerns and actions, he has enforced doctrines and duties which imply faith in human freedom and accountableness. Nor has any one a right to charge him with inconsistency, unless he is able to prove that the doctrines of the Divine foreknowledge, providence, and government are inconsistent with human freedom and accountableness.

As to the opinion, that the author of Ecclesiastes was a Sadducee or skeptic, I know not what support it has, except in his want of faith in a future life. But this doctrine, it must be remembered, formed no part of the Jewish religion. In this respect, the Preacher does not differ essentially from the author of the book of Job, and other writers of the Old Testament. He lived, indeed, as is probable, at a later period, when the faith in the immortality of the soul may have begun to prevail; but he had had no authoritative assurance of it. As to the charge of Sadduceeism, it is at least inconsistent with the author's alleged tendency to fatalism. For the Sadducees, according to Josephus, "take away fate, and say there is no such thing, and that the events of human affairs are not at its disposal; but they suppose that all our actions are in our own power, so that we are ourselves the causes of what is good, and receive what is evil from our own folly."

As to the charge of Epicurism, if by this is meant that the Preacher recommends the pleasures of sense, or pleasures of any kind, without regard to the obligations of duty

and religion, it appears to me that it is entirely false. The foundation of this opinion is a too literal interpretation of certain figurative and pointed expressions, in which the author recommends a quiet enjoyment of the good one possesses, in contradistinction from excessive earnestness, anxiety, and exertion after distant and future good. The Preacher is careful to tell us that a man cannot have the quiet enjoyment of life, which he recommends, except by "the gift of God to those who are good in his sight," that is, who discharge the duties of morality and religion. Ch. ii. 26.

There are some other topics on which the Preacher has been supposed to utter sentiments irreconcilable with each other, when he is, in fact, only giving the results of his various experience, and speaking of the subject in different relations. Thus, he often speaks in praise of wisdom, and of the advantages which it confers on its possessor; whilst, in other passages, he gives an impressive view of its insufficiency to guard its possessor from many of the calamities and trials which flesh is heir to. There is no inconsistency here. He also uses the word in different senses. When he says that "in much wisdom is much vexation, and he that increases knowledge increases sorrow," he is speaking of mere speculative knowledge; his meaning being, that, the more one knows of the world, the more he knows of its vanity, and that mere speculative knowledge cannot confer true satisfaction or happiness. In other passages, he commends that practical wisdom which enables its possessor to avoid the consequences of folly.

The great fault of the interpreters of this book has been that of ascribing to it more depth of thought, more logic, more method, greater definiteness of statement, and greater particularity of design, than really belong to it. The bold,

indefinite, unprecise language of the author has given great opportunity to the commentators of attaching their thoughts to the writer's language, instead of extracting from it his own thoughts. If we gather the design of the author from what he has done, we must conclude that his purpose was to please, to instruct, and to improve his readers, by making known to them his thoughts on the vanity of human life. The illustration of this topic is, and is regarded by the common reader, the prominent aim of the author. "Mere vanity, mere vanity, all is vanity," is the beginning, the middle, and the end of the essay. It is the chain which binds the whole together. And yet all parts of it do not conspire merely to illustrate this one topic. Throughout the work are interspersed advice and proverbial maxims respecting the conduct of life and the discharge of duty in relation to man and God. The author springs from one topic to another, to which he is drawn by some casual association, pursues the latter for a time, and then returns to the former. The vanity of human things being regarded as the main doctrinal view of the author, the general subject of the book, what Luther maintains to be its chief design, may be regarded as his prominent practical inference; namely, that men should, in the discharge of duty, enjoy with gratitude the blessings of life as they come, without distressing anxiety and over-strenuous exertions after distant and future good. Yet the practice of virtue and the fear of God are enjoined as of the first importance in regard to the enjoyment of such happiness as may be attained in a world of vanity; and while the young and the old are encouraged to enjoy life as it passes, and to lose none of its pleasures through a spirit of asceticism, or of anxiety and ambition about the distant and the future, yet only such an enjoyment of the good things of life is recommended as is consistent

with the constant remembrance of the Creator, and of the judgment which is appointed for all.

That the preceding account of the subject and design of the book is correct may appear from a more particular analysis of it, and from the commentary which follows it.

The principal thought is first laid down, that all is vain and unprofitable. Ch. i. 1, 2. This view the Preacher illustrates, —

1. By the wearisome, ever-recurring changes which are taking place without bringing to pass any thing new, or leading to any new result, adapted to give satisfaction to the mind of man. Ver. 4 – 11.
2. By the dissatisfaction attending the pursuit of wisdom or knowledge. Ver. 12 – 18.
3. By the unsatisfactoriness of the pleasures of life and of strivings after them, even when united with the pursuit of knowledge and philosophy. Ch. ii. 1 – 11.
4. The author then compares the pleasures of knowledge and the pleasures of sense with one another, and passes judgment on them; and recommends it as the best course which a man can pursue, in order to make the best of a vain world, to give up anxious cares about distant objects and perplexing subjects, and to enjoy with a tranquil, contented, cheerful mind the blessings of life, as he goes along in its paths. Ch. ii. 12 – 26.
5. The vanity of human things is illustrated by their established changes and periods, their fixed course, all things having their appointed limits and time. Hence the folly of anxiety, and the vanity of strenuous exertion, since man cannot alter the fixed and established course of things; and hence the wisdom of taking things as they come, and making the best of them, in obedience and submission to the Divine will. Ch. iii. 1 – 15.

6. The vanity of human things is illustrated by the prevalence of injustice and violence among men, and the resemblance of men to brutes in respect to hardships and death. Hence, too, the Preacher derives the conclusion, that it is best to take a cheerful enjoyment of the good things of life, without anxious cares respecting futurity. Ch. iii. 16 – 22.
7. The vanity of human things is next illustrated by reference to the sufferings of the oppressed; the envy which is excited toward the prosperous; the evils of avarice and of solitude; the evils attendant on royalty, arising from the infirmities of its possessor and the fickleness of the people. Ch. iv. Then follow some proverbial maxims respecting the worship of God, ch. v. 1 – 7; then proverbs recommending the quiet pursuit of agriculture, in preference to the agitating, avaricious pursuit of wealth, 8 – 17; these are followed by the advice before given, namely, to enjoy the good things of life as they come, without anxiety or wearisome efforts after distant and future good. 18 – 20.
8. The vanity of human things connected with wealth hoarded up without being enjoyed or used, ch. vi. 1 – 6, and with insatiable desires. 7 – 9. Then follows an obscure passage, apparently intended to illustrate the vanity of human things. 10 – 12.
9. Then follows a series of maxims and precepts respecting the guidance, support, and consolation of men in their passage through life, recommending righteousness and piety, with occasional remarks on the vanity of human things, such as the vanity of striving after wisdom, the certainty of death, &c. Ch. vii. 1 – viii. 13.
10. Then follows a new illustration of the vanity of human things, drawn from the prosperity of the wicked and the

sufferings of the righteous, and the impossibility of comprehending the ways of Providence; closing with the practical exhortation, which he has given so many times before, to a quiet and cheerful enjoyment of life, while life lasts, as "his portion," as "all that abideth with him of his labor," without indulging in vain grief for what cannot be helped, or in the anxious, restless pursuit of that which cannot be attained, or which, when attained, yields no satisfaction. "Go thy way," says he, after giving the most melancholy picture of life which he has yet presented, "eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a cheerful heart; for now is God pleased with thy works. Let thy garments be always white, and let not fragrant oil be wanting upon thy head. Enjoy life with the wife whom thou lovest, all the days of thy vain life, which he has given thee under the sun all thy vain days." Ch. viii. 14 – ix. 10.

11. A new illustration of the vanity of human life, drawn from the circumstances, that success does not always answer to a man's strength, wisdom, or other advantages; and that wisdom, with all its benefits to the public, often brings but little consideration to its possessor. Then follow various proverbial maxims, showing the advantages of wisdom and prudence, and the evil of rulers unfit for their station; and designed to regulate the conduct in private and public. This section closes with a recommendation of liberality to the poor, and of diligent exertion in our appropriate pursuits, without an over-anxious solicitude respecting the issue of our labors. Ch. ix. 11 – xi. 6.

12. The Preacher now exhorts to a cheerful enjoyment of life as it passes, and the putting away of care and sorrow, in view of that portion of life's vanity which con-

sists in the evil days of old age, and of the long period of darkness in prospect. Ch. xi. 7 – xii. 8. Then follows a repetition of the chief truth which has been illustrated in the work, namely, the vanity of human things; and the final recommendation of the Preacher, as the conclusion of the whole matter, and the whole business of man, namely, "to fear God and keep his commandments." Ch. xii. 9 – 14.

From this view of the contents of the book of Ecclesiastes it may be inferred that the author was a man of wisdom, virtue, and religion, according to the light which he had. He was not a fatalist, nor a skeptic or Epicurean, in any offensive sense of those terms. If he had doubts, they related to subjects upon which he found no light in the religion of his fathers and his country. If he recommended the enjoyment of life, it was such an enjoyment as was consistent with virtue and religion. A deep sense of religion is evidently habitual to him, notwithstanding the difficulties which perplexed his understanding. He has a living faith in a wise and benevolent God, and a righteous government of the world, though the principles of this government are regarded by him as being beyond the comprehension of man.

On the other hand, it may be conceded that he has given a more melancholy view of human life than is consistent with the spirit of Christianity, or of a comprehensive philosophy. He had never heard the glad tidings of great joy to all people. The light of the Sun of righteousness had not arisen upon his mind.

It may be admitted, too, that the subject of enjoyment occupied a more prominent place in the mind of the author than in the mind of Jesus Christ. A higher, more disinterested, more devoted spirit pervades the teachings of Him who spake as never man spake than we can find in any of

the writings of the Old Testament. The Christian is taught to do his duty, and let enjoyment take care of itself. "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you," is the language of him who came to perfect the law. I do not mean that the book of Ecclesiastes contains any particular precept inconsistent with the Sermon on the Mount. But in respect to its tone, spirit, and the prominence it gives to certain topics, it must be allowed to be far behind it. A spirit of self-sacrifice for the good of others is certainly not so congenial to the mind of the author as to the mind of Christ.

Finally, if it be conceded that the Preacher expresses occasional doubts, where Paul or John would be rejoicing in hope and confidence, this should not lead us to give the ancient Hebrew philosopher the name of Sadducee, skeptic, or Epicurean, but rather to thank God, who has raised up Jesus to show us the nature and design of our present existence, and "to bring life and immortality to light."

Perhaps it may be well to say a few words on the authorship of Ecclesiastes, though in a work of this didactic character it is not a very important question. That by "the Preacher, the son of David," in ch. i. 1, is denoted Solomon, there can be no doubt. But this by no means proves that Solomon was the author of the composition; but only that the author, whoever he was, adopted the plan of introducing into the book one so celebrated throughout the East for wisdom and for prosperity as Solomon, for the purpose of giving weight to the sentiments which are put into his mouth. In adopting this plan, it is not probable that he intended to deceive his contemporaries, but only to make use of a literary fiction, such as is common in modern times; a fiction which is not very carefully supported. The prevalent belief, it is true, has been, that Solomon was the author of the book.

But whoever will proceed from the perusal of the Proverbs of Solomon to that of the book of Ecclesiastes must receive from the diction of the latter a strong conviction that it is the production, not only of a different author, but of a later age. In fact, there has been no greater opposition to this opinion than was to be expected from the natural prejudice in favor of the received tradition. The best scholars since the time of Grotius, who, so far as I know, was the first to call in question the common belief, have adopted his opinion. Even the Romanist, Jahn, who is very slow to adopt an opinion not in accordance with the tradition of the Church, is unable to resist the evidence against the opinion that Solomon was the author of Ecclesiastes. Such critics as Dathe, Doederlein, Pareau, are of the same opinion. Dathe observes, that "Doederlein and Eichhorn have established their point by arguments so weighty, that none except very stubborn defenders of ancient tradition can deny it."

Even Professor Stuart, in his recent work on the canon of the Old Testament (p. 139), admits, though the admission is hardly consistent with the general argument of his book, that "the diction of this book differs so widely from that of Solomon, in the book of Proverbs, that it is difficult to believe that both came from the same pen. Chaucer does not differ more from Pope, than Ecclesiastes from Proverbs. It appears to me, when I read Coheleth, that it presents one of those cases which leave no room for doubt, so striking and prominent is the discrepancy."

It is much more difficult to form a confident opinion as to the time when the book of Ecclesiastes was written, than it is to decide that it belongs to a much later age than that of Solomon. From the Aramæan complexion of the language, from the religious and literary character of the book, and from its spirit and tone, as being suited to times of calamity

and oppression, one may feel considerable confidence that it was written after the return of the Jews from the exile at Babylon; and there seems to be nothing to object to the prevalent opinion of the German critics, such as De Wette, Knobel, and Ewald, who date the composition of it near the fall of the Persian monarchy, or at the beginning of the Macedonian domination under Alexander; that is, about 330 years before the Christian era. There are no reasons of any weight for supposing the canon of Scripture to have closed before this period. We are inclined, however, to adopt the date above mentioned, rather from the absence of more valid arguments in favor of any other opinion than from the conclusiveness of the reasons urged in its support. As to the opinion which has been advanced, that traces of an acquaintance with Grecian philosophy are found in Ecclesiastes, we can only say that we have not been able to discern them.

THE CANTICLES.

The first and most interesting question which presents itself in relation to this work is, What is its subject? If the Song of Songs had been found in any other book but the Bible, I presume there would have been great unanimity in answering the question. It would be said that few compositions existed, every line of which revealed so fully the subject which occupied the mind of the author. It would be said that one sentiment pervaded the whole, and that sentiment was love. In fact, there is now no dispute re-

specting the subject of the book, so far as it can be expressed in a single word. It is allowed by all to be love, reciprocal love. The question is, What kind of love is here represented? Is it spiritual, or is it sentimental love, that is, the love of the sexes, as represented in poetry? Is it that love which exists between God and man, or Christ and the Church, or that which exists between man and woman?

Since the time of Origen, the opinion has prevailed, that the work is designed to set forth the mutual love of Christ and the Church. This distinguished allegorist exerted his great talents, as we are informed by St. Jerome, in illustrating the book. In his other works, says he, Origen surpassed other men; in this he surpassed himself; so that in him may seem to have been fulfilled that which is said, "The king has led me to his chamber." The unbounded influence of Origen gave the allegorical interpretation prevalence in the Church; so that, when Theodore of Mopsuestia, a man of great learning and talent, defended the literal sense of the Canticles, he was excommunicated for this and other causes, after his death, by an assembly of fanatical bishops and monks, the second council of Constantinople, in the year 553.

Since the time of the condemnation of Theodore, the prevalent belief of Christendom has been, that the book contains a representation of the mutual love of Christ and the Church. This would seem to be the most general opinion at the present day, if we may judge of the opinion of the Christian Church by what is expressed in the popular commentaries. It is contained in the captions to the chapters in the common version.

Among the modern Jews, too, the allegorical sense of the book has prevailed, according to which it has been supposed to set forth the dealings of God with the Jewish people.

Thus, the Targumist on this book applies it to Jehovah and the Jewish nation, in their journeyings from Egypt to the land of Canaan.

As the mystical interpretation of this book commenced and advanced with the general prevalence and progress of the allegorical mode of interpretation, so it has declined in proportion as that mode of interpretation has been understood to be without foundation. Since the time of Grotius, the prevailing opinion of the learned critics who have examined the work has been, that the subject of it is not spiritual or religious love, but that which exists between man and woman.

The peculiar view of Grotius has found few supporters. He supposes the book to contain a dialogue between newly married persons, in which very gross ideas are veiled by decent expressions. But since his time, that is, since the principle of interpretation has been generally acknowledged, that language can have no other meaning than that which exists in the mind of the writer, the mystical sense has been given up by most critics on the Continent, and by many in England ; such as Michaelis, Herder, Eichhorn, Doederlein, Dathe, Seiler, Jahn, De Wette, Umbreit, Ewald, and many others. In England, the distinguished Methodist, Adam Clarke, the Calvinistic dissenter, John Pye Smith, and the Biblical translator, Dr. Boothroyd, who is also an orthodox dissenter, have also abandoned the mystical explanation.

In this country, the old notion, that the book sets forth the mutual love of Christ and the Church, is probably the most prevalent. But Professor Robinson, in his Bible Dictionary, adopts the view, that the subject of the book is the mutual love of Jehovah and the Jewish nation.

Professor Stuart, of Andover, has also avowed his faith in the mystical exposition of the Canticles, in his recent

work on the canon of the Old Testament. He has adopted the view, that the subject of the book is the relation of God to the individual soul, and the aspirations of the soul to be united to the Creator.

I might mention several other theories. But it would answer no good purpose, as I do not intend to examine them one by one, in order to show which is the most, or the least, tenable. I believe that there is not the slightest foundation for any one of them; that not one of them can be accepted, without setting at defiance all just views of the nature of language, and all solid principles of interpretation.

The decisive objection, which applies in nearly an equal degree to all these theories, is, that there is no mention, or even intimation, in the work itself, of that which they say is its great and principal subject. These interpreters tell us that the work expresses the mutual love of Jehovah and the Hebrew nation, or of Christ and the Church, or of God and the individual soul. In opposition to this, it is enough to say, that it is mere fancy; that there is not the slightest allusion to God, to Christ, to the Church, or to the soul of man, as related to God, in the whole book. The only persons introduced into it are human. There is not a sentence, or part of a sentence, which, according to the common use of language, expresses any religious idea. This is the decisive consideration with me. The author has in no way indicated that he uses language in any but the obvious and usual sense. In all allegory, it is necessary that the principal subject should be in some way indicated. If allegory is a long continued comparison, it is necessary that the author should in some way make known to us the subject compared. But in the book of Canticles this is not the case. The principal subject, as understood by the allegorists, does

not appear in it. The book is all comparison, and nothing to be compared; all illustration, and nothing to be illustrated. The thing to be illustrated comes from without, — from the mind of the interpreter, arbitrarily imposing a sense on the author's words in consequence of some imagined necessity, which is wholly independent of any thing in the work itself. In the parable of the Prodigal Son, who would have known that it was intended to illustrate the disposition of God towards men, unless our Saviour had indicated such an application of it? So in the allegory of the Vine which came out of Egypt, it is expressly stated, "The vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel." So every writer of common sense, who makes use of metaphor, comparison, or allegory, will in some way indicate the principal subject to be illustrated. But it is not pretended that the author of the Canticles has done this. The only just conclusion, then, is, that he has not made use of allegory; that he designed his language to be understood in its common and obvious sense.

It has been said, in favor of the mystical interpretation, that in other writers of the Scriptures language similar to that in the Canticles is used; that Jehovah is called the husband of his people, and the people represented as a faithless wife. Now, without stating at present how small is the resemblance between the Canticles and the comparisons just referred to, there is one obvious difference which deprives this reference to such comparisons of any force as an argument. It is, that the subject compared is always prominent in those illustrations of the Hebrew prophets. Thus, in Isaiah liv. 5, "Thy Maker is thy husband; Jehovah of hosts is his name." Such illustrations, therefore, if they resembled the language in the Canticles much more than they do, would only show how its language *might have been*, not how

it *is*, used. Because an adulterous woman, in the writings of the prophets, represents the Jewish people in their rebellion against Jehovah, it surely does not follow that every woman or maiden in the Scriptures does, or may, denote the Jewish people. Because a tender husband sometimes denotes a compassionate God in relation to his people, it surely does not follow that every husband or lover in the Scriptures denotes the Supreme Being. Because the Church is compared to a chaste virgin, it does not follow that every virgin denotes the Church. Before we can admit that any writer intends to denote the Supreme Being by such expressions, he must himself indicate it by express declaration, or intelligible implication, as the prophets have done in the cases to which reference has been made. Now the author of the Canticles has not intimated to us in any way that in his songs he had in view any other characters than man and woman, or any other kind of love than human or sentimental love. We have no right, then, to go beyond this meaning. Those who have adduced this illustration from the prophets have at best only shown what *might be*, not what *is*. There is no part of the Old Testament, or at least no difficult part, which may not be allegorized with as much reason as the Canticles.

But, in the second place, I deny that the language of the prophets, in the cases referred to, is at all analogous to that of the Canticles. Those passages in the prophets which set forth the ingratitude of the house of Israel to Jehovah under the image of a wife faithless to a tender husband are wholly unlike any thing in the book of Canticles. In the former the Supreme Being always appears as the high and lofty One who inhabiteth eternity, the comparison being used incidentally to illustrate his own conduct or that of his people. In the latter we find only lovers and maidens; the praise of

personal beauty and passionate expressions of love; lovers conversing with each other, placed in different scenes, eating, drinking, sleeping, embracing, running, climbing, visiting gardens, feeding flocks, in fine all that is usually found in erotic poetry. Who can fail to perceive the difference between such representations and any views which the sublime Hebrew prophets give of the character and conduct of God?

It seems to me wholly inconsistent with the reverence for Jehovah which existed in the Hebrew mind, that one of their writers should compose such a book as Canticles to illustrate the feelings which should exist between man and his Creator. It is a monstrous supposition. There is nothing in the Hebrew literature to justify it. Who is there among us that would dare to use much of the language of the Canticles in reference to the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity? Had not the Jews as great a reverence for the venerable name as Christians? Let us conceive of the author of the fortieth chapter of Isaiah, after having spoken of the Supreme Being as having "measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out the heaven with his span, and gathered the dust of the earth into a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance," as the Being "before whom all nations are nothing, and accounted less than nothing and vanity," as addressing himself to his devotions. Would he have commenced with, "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth; for thy caresses are better than wine"? Would he have applied to the Supreme Being the language, "My beloved spake and said unto me, 'Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away'"? Would Solomon, who, in his prayer at the dedication of the temple, used the sublime language, "Behold, the heaven, even the heaven of heavens, cannot contain thee," have ad-

dressed his Creator in the language, "The voice of my beloved! Behold, he comes, leaping upon the mountains, bounding over the hills. Like a gazelle is my beloved, or a young hind," etc.? I might proceed with interrogations of this kind, but there is language in the Canticles which I could not apply to the Supreme Being in the manner required by the mystical theory, without feeling guilty of blasphemy.

To me, also, it appears singular that any one should think it to be for the honor of the book, or of the Jewish religion, or of the Bible, to regard the Canticles as designed to be a book of devotion, a guide to the Jews in the expression of their religious feelings to their Creator. If it be regarded as a specimen of the erotic poetry of the Hebrews, it will be treated with indifference by most readers, and consequently do them no harm. But if regarded as an inspired model and help for devotion, its direct tendency is injurious to morals and religion. That such is its tendency, when so understood, is too plain to need argument. Even Professor Stuart, who professes to believe it an inspired composition, designed "to express the warm and ardent desire of the soul after God," is compelled by his moral feelings to express the strangely inconsistent opinion, that "it is the safer and better course to place the Canticles, as the Jews did, among the books withdrawn from ordinary use"; and, again, that those who neglect to read the book "are to be commended rather than blamed."

On the injurious effect of a religious use of the Canticles, the testimony of Dr. Adam Clarke, who, as a travelling Methodist preacher, had great opportunities for observation relating to the subject, is as follows. Speaking of those who attach a spiritual meaning to the book, he says: — "Their conduct is dangerous; and the result of their well-

intentioned labors has been of very little service to the cause of Christianity in general, or to the interests of true morality in particular. By their mode of interpretation, an undignified, not to say mean and carnal, language has been propagated among many well-meaning religious people, that has associated itself too much with selfish and animal affections, and created feelings that accorded little with the dignified spirituality of the religion of the Lord Jesus. I speak not from report; I speak from observation and experience, and observation not hastily made. The conviction on my mind, and the conclusion to which I have conscientiously arrived, are the result of frequent examination, careful reading, and close thinking at intervals, for nearly fifty years; and, however I may be blamed by some and pitied by others, I must say, and I say it as fearlessly as I do conscientiously, that in this inimitably fine, elegant Hebrew ode I see nothing of Christ and his Church, and nothing that appears to have been intended to be thus understood; and nothing, if applied in this way, that, *per se*, can promote the interests of vital godliness, or cause the simple and sincere not to know Christ after the flesh. Here I conscientiously stand: — May God help me."

To other theories, which assign a mystical meaning to the Canticles, some of the arguments which I have used against the view adopted by Professor Stuart apply with equal, others with less, force. All of them are liable to the decisive objection, that they are in opposition to the received use of language. At a time when all the books of the Scriptures were interpreted in the allegorical mode, as by the Church fathers, it was a matter of course that the Canticles should be treated in the same way. But now that just principles of interpretation have been applied to the explanation of most parts of the Bible, it is time to give up attempts to allegorize

the Canticles. To the popular theory, that Christ and the Church are denoted, may be urged the additional objection, that there is not the least appearance of prediction in the book. It implies throughout a state of things then existing, or past. This theory is, also, if possible, more arbitrary, and more completely destitute of support from the use of language and the state of religious knowledge among the contemporaries of the writer, or among the Jews before the time of Christ, than any one of the principal theories which have been mentioned. Against this view, too, it may be justly urged that the book is nowhere alluded to in the New Testament. If the subject of it had been supposed to be Christ and the Church, it is reasonable to suppose that allusions to it would have been very frequent, both in the Gospels and Epistles.

Since, then, there is no reason for supposing a mystical religious meaning in the Canticles, and since their whole tenor and complexion are in opposition to such a meaning, the book must be interpreted according to the received use of language. Thus interpreted, its principal subject, as all will admit, is the reciprocal affection between the sexes, as set forth in poetical representation. There may be some doubt as to the relation in which the parties stood to each other; whether in that of lovers before marriage, or in that of the head of the harem to one of its members, or in that of husband and wife. That the last supposition is not true throughout seems to be obvious from the general character of the representation, as well as from particular passages. It is also not analogous to similar compositions by writers of other countries to suppose the affection of married life to be the subject of the work.

We have, then, in the Canticles the remains of the amatory poetry of the Hebrews. Whether the book is to be re-

garded as one whole, a regular drama, or as a collection of several amatory songs or idyls, is a question which may be considered as somewhat doubtful. Without going into a full discussion of the subject, I adopt the latter opinion, which was the opinion of Herder, Doederlein, Eichhorn, De Wette, Sir William Jones, and Dr. Good, — for the reason that there is not sufficient evidence in favor of a general plan or course of dramatic action. Those who have maintained the other opinion have been obliged to make a great many arbitrary suppositions, and to draw largely on their own imaginations, in order to make out any plausible course of action, or any general design which the writer intended to accomplish.

Thus, while Bossuet and Percy suppose the work to be a pastoral drama, designed to celebrate the marriage of Solomon with the daughter of the king of Egypt, two of the most recent of the German writers on the book, very young men, however, suppose that it is designed to set forth the praise of true love in humble life, and how an innocent country maiden resisted all the arts of King Solomon to seduce her from her faith to her shepherd lover. Theories as diverse as these may be expected, when a design or plan is sought where there is none to be found. Respecting the first of these theories, it may be remarked that there is very little in the book which seems suited to the occasion of royal nuptials; that there are no allusions to Solomon which imply that he was the subject of the composition, except in ch. iii. 6 – 11, and, perhaps, ch. i. 9 – ii. 7; and that there is too much of rural life in it to be suited to the scene of a royal court. The objection to the second theory is, that it comes more from the imagination of the interpreter than from the language of the author. Dr. Good remarks: — "The Song of Songs cannot be one connected epithalami-

um, since the transitions are too abrupt for the wildest flights of the Oriental muse, and evidently imply a variety of openings and conclusions; while, as a regular drama, it is deficient in almost every requisite that could give it such a classification; it has neither dramatic fable nor action, neither involution nor catastrophe; it is without a beginning, a middle, or an end. To call it such is to injure it essentially; it is to raise expectations which can never be gratified, and to force parts upon parts which have no possible connection."

It is true that it is not easy to determine with confidence where each song begins and ends. But the supposition that the book contains several separate pieces is attended with fewer difficulties than that which regards it as one poem of the dramatic kind. It certainly has the advantage of not ascribing to the author more than he has expressed. The manner of dividing the book which seems to me most probable is indicated in the text of my Translation.

That all these separate songs or poems proceeded from one author is now so general an opinion of the best critics, that it is not necessary to discuss the subject. Whether this author were Solomon admits of greater doubt. When we consider how many of the inscriptions in the book of Psalms are at variance with their contents, we cannot attach much importance to the title of this book. The diction, in its Aramæan character, varies so much from that of the Proverbs, that many modern critics have concluded that it proceeded from a different author. There are also passages which do not well harmonize with the supposition that Solomon was the author; such as ch. i. 4, 5, iii. 6 – 11, vii. 5, viii. 11, 12. On the other hand, there seem to be several allusions to the circumstances and historical relations of the age of Solomon, or that immediately succeeding it. See i. 4, 5, 9, 12, iii. 7, &c., iv. 4, vi. 4, 8, 9, viii. 11, 12. The

spirit and character of the poetry seem also to agree well with the most flourishing period of Hebrew literature. The peculiar diction is supposed by De Wette to be susceptible of explanation by maintaining that these songs were preserved orally in the mouths of the people, and were thus in some measure altered. Others seek an explanation of this peculiarity in the province of Palestine to which the writer may have belonged. Either of these suppositions appears to me more probable than that the author wrote long after the captivity, and transferred himself back to the age of Solomon. I therefore suppose the Canticles to have been written by some Jewish poet, either in the reign of Solomon or soon after it.

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ON

VICARIOUS ATONEMENT.

By Rev. J. H. MORISON.

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VICARIOUS ATONEMENT.

The atonement, or reconciliation between God and man, is undoubtedly the great end of the Christian dispensation. But how is this reconciliation to be effected? According to the old Calvinistic view, Christ's blood was shed in order to appease the anger of an offended God. According to a more modern and infinitely less objectionable view, man had sinned against God, and therefore, before God could enable him through repentance and conversion to become the subject of free grace, mercy, and forgiveness, it was necessary that a sacrifice should be made in order to secure and establish the sanctity of the law which had been violated. God needed not to be reconciled. He so loved the world even in its sinfulness "that he sent his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." But the law must not be violated with impunity. If the penalty is to be remitted, some sacrificial, vicarious atonement must be offered in its place.

Here is the general statement, and in the statement is involved the general *a priori* argument for a vicarious atonement. In reply, we say, — First, that it is not safe, from our imperfect human laws in our imperfect application of them, to

draw conclusions in respect to the perfect law of God in his perfect administration of that law, looking as he does into the heart and secret motives of all men. Secondly, even in the most perfect human governments, a portion of the legal penalty is sometimes wisely remitted, when rulers are thoroughly convinced of the reformation of the offender. We know of no government in which a pardoning power is not vested somewhere, and that with no other atonement than evidence of penitence and reformation. We allow, however, that, unlike what we see in the Christian dispensation, the cases of pardon are and must be the exceptions, and not the rule. Thirdly, we reply, that, even under the Christian dispensation, the entire penalty is not removed, but enough of punishment is still left to make us feel the stern retributive authority of the law. No amount of faith in Christ's blood, though accompanied by the most thorough repentance and reformation, will restore to the prodigal the constitution which he has ruined by his excesses, nor the intellectual and moral progress that he might have made. There is a loss which can never be made up, and in many cases a loss which we shall carry with us into eternity, — a lasting memorial of the retributive sanctity and authority of God's law. We may "receive high spiritual graces and dignities, and become heirs of heaven," and still the law of retribution be fulfilling itself in us. Fourthly, we have reason to suppose that it is a part of the Divine law, as established from the beginning, not only to enact certain penalties for sin, but to remit a portion of those penalties when the sin is repented of and forsaken. There is not only a law of death, but a law of life; not only a law of destruction working out its end while the higher law is violated, but a law of life interposing with its remedial agencies when the violation of it has ceased. In this way Christ, by turning men from sin, by

furnishing men motives and helps to a life of holiness, and new facilities in the great remedial process, and thus saving them from the fatal penalties of continued transgression, is fulfilling the law, converting into a law of life that which must otherwise have been a law of death. In strictness of speech, there is but one law. The same law which is our enemy, working death in us while we violate it, becomes our friend when we obey it, and immediately begins to heal, though it can never entirely erase, the injuries which we have done to ourselves. But in reconciling us to God and bringing us into harmony with the great law of spiritual life, and making us the recipients of its remedial influences, Christ is in the highest sense fulfilling the law, even when he is thus making us the subjects of Divine grace, mercy, and pardon.

This, however, is only preliminary to the Scriptural view of the doctrine. And as the whole Scriptural argument rests to a great extent on the construction that is put upon the Old Testament sacrifices, we shall, though at the risk of fatiguing our readers, enter minutely into this branch of the subject. The idea that sacrifice is a substitute for legal penalty, it is common to say, "was always its leading idea, and the idea which brought it into religious use." But how are we to ascertain this fact? Either from some specific statement in the Scriptures, or from the history which is there given of the rite. No such specific statement in respect to the leading idea of sacrifice is given. We are left, therefore, to infer it from the history of sacrifice as given in the Scriptures.

From its history we may establish, as we think, beyond all question, first, that sacrifice was used far more frequently in other cases than in connection with the remission of penalty for sin; and secondly, that, in cases of the most aggravated

sins, forgiveness was sought in other ways, without sacrifice. Besides, it cannot, we think, be established satisfactorily, even in those cases where the penalty was remitted in connection with sacrifice, that the sacrifice was of itself accepted instead of the penalty.

1. So far was expiation for sin from being always the leading idea of sacrifice, that sacrifice was used far more frequently in other cases than in connection with the remission of penalty for sin. The first account of sacrifice that we have is that of Cain and Abel, where the acceptableness of the gift is made to depend entirely on the conduct of the giver, and where not the slightest intimation is given of any connection between the sacrifice and the forgiveness of sin. So, through the whole book of Genesis, though the altar and sacrifice are often mentioned, they are in no instance connected with the forgiveness of sin. But if this had been the leading idea, could it have been so long overlooked, or not expressed? Down to the time of the Levitical law, not only is no such leading idea expressed, but wherever any particulars are given, they are of such a character as to preclude it, as in the case of Abel, of Noah after the flood, and of Jacob at the time of his covenant with Laban. But in the Levitical law there was sacrifice at the offering of the first fruits, at the birth of a child, at the cure of a loathsome disease, at the consecration of a priest. There was sacrifice offered for a thanksgiving, and sacrifice offered as a vow. When suspicion had fallen upon the innocent in certain cases, they professed their innocence, and by sacrifice an atonement was made, though they had been guilty of no sin. Three times a year, at the great national festivals, the feast of the Passover, the feast of Pentecost, and the feast of Tabernacles, every Jew was called to offer sacrifice, as a testimonial of thanksgiving. Then there were sins of ignorance, in which no

guilt certainly had been incurred, where nevertheless atonement was to be made by sacrifice. By far the greatest part of the Jewish sacrifices had no connection with the remission of any penalty for sin, and give, therefore, no intimation of that as the leading idea of sacrifice; but, on the contrary, afford a very strong presumption that such was not the leading idea.

2. But, in the second place, while expiation for sin was not always the leading idea, and usually did not enter at all into the idea of sacrifice, so, on the other hand, in some of the most aggravated offences, atonement was made and forgiveness gained without sacrifice. A remarkable instance of this may be found in corresponding accounts of the same transaction given in the thirty-second chapter of Exodus and the ninth chapter of Deuteronomy. After the most criminal worship of the golden calf by the people and Aaron, Moses said, "Ye have sinned a great sin, and now I will go up unto the Lord; peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin." But no sacrifice was offered. "I fell down," says Moses, Deut. ix. 18, 19, "before the Lord, forty days and forty nights: I did neither eat bread nor drink water, because of all your sins which ye sinned, in doing wickedly in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger. For I was afraid of the anger and hot displeasure wherewith the Lord was wroth against you to destroy you. But the Lord hearkened unto me at that time also." Here, then, was an atonement, but no sacrifice. In the same manner, through the intercession of Moses, atonement was made for Aaron. Still another instance of the same kind is related in the same chapter. Sacrifice, therefore, in the view of Moses, was not always necessary as an expiation for sin, or an atonement.

In the twelfth chapter of 2 Samuel we have an account of David's conduct after he had been rebuked by the prophet

for his atrocious crimes. No sacrifice was offered. "David besought God for the child: and David fasted and went in and lay all night upon the earth." The prayer was not granted, but the conduct of David, especially when taken in connection with the fifty-first Psalm, which is supposed to have been written by him at that time, shows emphatically that he did not think sacrifice essentially connected with the remission of the penalty of transgression. "Thou desirest not sacrifice, else I would give it. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." The same idea is carried out in the later prophets. Take that remarkable passage in Ezekiel xxxiii. 14 – 16: — "When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; if he turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful and right; if the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he hath robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die. None of his sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him."

Sacrifice, then, was not essential as an atonement for sin, for atonement was sometimes made without sacrifice. Neither was expiation or a vicarious atonement the leading idea of sacrifice under the Jewish economy. If, therefore, it should be proved that in some specific offences sacrifice was received as a substitute for civil penalties, no conclusions could be drawn from the past to warrant us in the general assertion that sacrifice is necessary in order that God may forgive the penitent and remit the penalty of his transgressions.

But we must here, after careful examination, say, that in the strongest case selected (Lev. vi. 1 – 7), though the forgiveness followed the sacrifice, yet there is nothing in the language to indicate that the forgiveness was any more intimately connected with the sacrifice than with any other part of the transaction. After specifying the

crime, the words are as follows: — "He shall even restore it in the principal, and shall add the fifth part more thereto, and give it unto him to whom it appertaineth, in the day of his trespass-offering. And he shall bring his trespass-offering unto the Lord, a lamb without blemish out of the flock, for a trespass-offering, unto the priest. And the priest shall make an atonement for him before the Lord; and it shall be forgiven him of all that he hath done." Now, by what rule of Biblical interpretation are we to separate sacrifice from the other parts of the transaction, and attribute to that alone the atonement or expiation, or forgiveness of sins? There certainly is nothing in the language to authorize such an inference. And when we remember that, in most cases under the Jewish law, sacrifice had nothing to do with the expiation of sin, and that, in some cases at least, sins were forgiven without sacrifice, what right have we, without specific instructions to that effect, to attribute to the rite here an efficacy which in most cases certainly does not belong to it, which in no other case is directly attributed to it, but which in some other cases (Ezekiel xxxiii. 14 – 16) is attributed to the other elements in this transaction, viz. repentance and restitution?

What, then, was the leading idea of sacrifice, — the idea which attended it in all its different applications? It was, we think, that of a solemn religious rite, directly connecting the worshipper with his God, sometimes as an offering of gratitude, giving back to the great Giver the first fruits of his bounty as a testimonial of devout thankfulness; sometimes offered to solemnize a covenant or vow; sometimes employed to give peculiar solemnity to some great event, as the consecration of a priest, or the anniversary of the nation's deliverance; and sometimes, in penitence and sorrow and public humiliation, to give a deeper religious significance to the confession of guilt and the prayer for forgiveness. This idea is

broad enough to cover the whole ground, while that usually suggested will not meet half the cases in which sacrifice was offered under the Jewish law. Sacrifice, whether directly appointed by God in the beginning, or arising from instincts which he implanted in the soul, was fitted in the early stages of the world, and employed, to throw a peculiar religious solemnity over all the transactions with which it was connected. By ignorant worshippers it was often perverted to other and inferior ends, but we find in the Old Testament no evidence that it was ever legitimately recognized in any other sense by the great lawgivers and prophets of Israel.

We cannot positively deny, that it may have been prophetically regarded as pointing forward with a deeper meaning to the great sacrifice on Calvary, as most of the Jewish rites had unquestionably a prospective reference to their final consummation and fulfilment in the religion of Jesus. We cannot deny this; for we do not believe that all the meaning of any Divine precept, law, or rite even, is contained within the limits of what we distinctly comprehend by our intellect. We should as soon think of bounding the material universe by the reach of our own particular telescope, as of making our thought the measure of a Divine ordinance. But while we may not positively deny the truth of a doctrine for which we can neither see any good reason, nor find any sufficient evidence, we certainly cannot receive it. This is just our position with respect to a vicarious import in sacrifice under the Jewish economy. In many cases it certainly had not a vicarious meaning, and in some cases an atonement was made and forgiveness secured without it. It is not true, therefore, that "sacrifice in its very nature is vicarious," or that it was, under the Jewish system, essential to forgiveness. That it was in *any* case vicarious, in the sense in which that word is used in this connection, is a point on which we find no deci-

sive evidence on either side, and therefore we can neither deny nor affirm respecting it. Hence the whole argument drawn from the Jewish sacrifices in favor of a vicarious atonement falls through, and we are prepared to inquire what is taught on this subject in the Christian dispensation.

We ought, however, to pause for a moment in considering one topic. "Christ came to fulfil the law." In his own emphatic language, "one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law until all be fulfilled." By the law here, he unquestionably meant, as we think, the Mosaic, and not, as is sometimes supposed, the moral law. He was speaking to Jews, every one of whom would understand him as referring to the Mosaic law, and the constant reference to that law through the Sermon on the Mount, not only shows that he referred to it, but gives some indication of the sense in which it was to be fulfilled. How, then, is this law to be fulfilled in him? First, we might say that it was literally fulfilled in him by his perfect obedience. But his words, we think, have a wider meaning, and refer to the fact that the whole Jewish dispensation, which had been a system of means and preparation, should have its perfect consummation and fulfilment in that which was to succeed. The germ of the plant, advancing through all its different stages, finds its consummation and fulfilment in the perfect tree. The larva, whatever external transformations it may pass through, finds at last its complete development in the perfect insect, although it may now have not one particle of matter, nor a single external organ, which it at first possessed. The bud unfolds itself, and by apparent decay the flower has really its fulfilment in the ripened fruit. External developments and organs, adapted to the primitive condition and intermediate stages, fall off, and by falling off contribute to the fulfilment of the ultimate design, which,

for a time, was helped forward by their aid. Now, the Mosaic dispensation was the law of God in one stage of its development among men. Its particular provisions, rites, ceremonies, may be regarded as the organs best fitted at that time to preserve it, and prepare the way for its more perfect development. The Psalms and the Prophets, i. e. the whole religious teaching among the Jews, helped on the work, and, when the fulness of time had come, all were fulfilled in the perfect religion of Jesus, inasmuch as that was the full and perfect development towards which God's law, through Moses and the prophets, had been tending from the beginning. Thus, in regard to the law of Moses, not one jot or one tittle passed away until all was fulfilled in the dispensation of Jesus. We are not, therefore, to consider the Jewish law a system of types which shall find their separate antitypes in Christianity. But, including, as we must, under the idea the whole Jewish history, it was rather a series of organizations through which the law of God was carried on till the great end of all these preparatory stages was fulfilled in the Christian dispensation. Most of the external rites fell off because their purpose was now fulfilled. We cannot, then, reason directly from the old to the new, and say that, because a particular rite had a particular office under the old dispensation, we must therefore find something corresponding to it in the new. Christianity is not a building, put up of finer materials and on a larger scale, yet still copied from the plan of a former building; but it is the higher life which has resulted from previous stages of religious revelation and culture, with such additions as God chose to make in a new and higher manifestation of himself. Judaism is fulfilled in Christianity as the present life shall be fulfilled in that which is to come.

We have endeavoured to ascertain the meaning of sacrifice under the Jewish law. We come now to ascertain whether

that element is retained in Christianity, and, if so, to inquire what is its meaning.

In approaching this part of the subject, we feel constrained to say, that we believe there is both in the life and death of Christ a power which the world has only begun to comprehend. Nearly six thousand years had passed away before men suspected so much as the existence of that subtile electric element which they now begin to see is essential to all organic life. How the life of Christ becomes the light of the world, how we live in him as the branches in the vine, how he is the resurrection and the life, how he is sent to be the propitiation for our sins, so that we have redemption through his blood, — how these things are, we partly see ; but we feel that there is in these expressions an extent, if not methods of influence, altogether beyond what our minds have yet been able distinctly to comprehend on any theological hypothesis. The expressions themselves lead us to this inference, and we are confirmed in the impression by seeing that there are in the life of Christ powers at work which we cannot measure, or reduce to any normal standard of ours, and that there is a depth of anguish in the agony of Gethsemane, and circumstances attending his death and resurrection, which we cannot wholly account for on any hypothesis whatever. In this whole matter, as indeed in all the works of God, we see much that we cannot fully understand. We feel that it is a subject altogether too vast and deep to be thoroughly explored in all its parts by our human thought. The Scriptures, especially in what they teach respecting our Saviour, we always approach with something of this feeling. We may learn much from them, and our knowledge of Jesus, as we live in him, may become every day more extended and more clear, but we do not feel that we can ever exhaust the fountain which is there opened to us.

But when we come to examine particular opinions offered to us by our Christian brethren, and are called upon to receive them on Scriptural grounds, we feel that we are bound not to adopt them as articles of faith unless we find evidence that they are true. This is the position we hold in regard to the vicarious atonement made by the death of Christ. We believe that by his life and death, his present intercession and mediation, he has removed all the obstacles in the way of our redemption; and that if now we only accept his offers, and strive to "work out our own salvation with fear and trembling," all needful helps will be granted "to make our calling and election sure." This we believe with the most implicit confidence. We would come to him as little children. We would reverence, obey, and follow him, and from him learn how to forgive and be forgiven. But when called upon to believe a particular doctrine in regard to the precise manner in which his death is to act upon the counsels of the Almighty, so as to remove the obstructions which must otherwise have prevented God from interposing in our behalf, we can only say that we know nothing about these obstructions, and nothing about the vicarious provision, except what is taught in the Scriptures; and there we find no decisive evidence of the existence of any such obstacles, or any such interposition for their removal. Such obstacles and such an interposition may have been, but we find no distinct evidence of them in the Scriptures. The only obstacles which we find there distinctly recognized as lying in the way of an atonement or reconciliation between God and man, are in man's character, and are to be overcome only by his conversion, regeneration, and sanctification through faith in Christ, and by the aid of that spirit which he has promised.

God, as some of our Orthodox brethren allow, needed not to be reconciled. But what has Christ done to move our

hearts and draw us towards him, that we may believe and live? He subjected himself to the indignities of a most humiliating life and a most painful death because of our sins, that he might free us from them. In this sense, "he was wounded for our transgressions, the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and by his stripes we are healed." In this way, as the most moving spectacle that could be exhibited to a sinful world, "the Lord laid on him the iniquities of us all." "For the transgression of my people was he stricken." "His soul was made an offering for sin." "He gave his life a ransom for many." "His blood is shed for many, for the remission of sins." These expressions are perfectly true, and have a most profound meaning, if we consider only the influence of Christ's sufferings and death in the conversion and regeneration of the world. They harmonize with the doctrine of a vicarious atonement; but they do not require it; they do not necessarily suggest or imply it. It is remarkable that, in most of these passages, Christ is represented as bearing, not the penalty of our transgressions, but our iniquities, — an expression which can be literally understood on no hypothesis that we can think of as possible.

We will now comment separately on a few of the strong passages quoted by those who defend the theory of vicarious atonement. "For Christ our passover is sacrificed for us." The passover was not a sin-offering, and therefore cannot indicate a vicarious sacrifice for sin. "Christ died for our sins." Certainly; he came into the world, taught, suffered, died on account of, or for, our sins. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins." In the Greek text, both Griesbach and Scholtz omit the expression "through his blood," as not found in the best manuscripts. That, however, is of little consequence; neither do we insist on what we think the more exact version of the passage, "In

whom we have redemption, even freedom and deliverance from sins." But without any such emendation, if Christ by his life, and especially by his death, so acts upon us that we repent, and forsake our sins and become the subjects of Divine grace and mercy, is it not true, that in him "we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins"? In the same sense we read, "This is my blood, shed for many, for the remission of sins." It is also in this same sense true, that "he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself," and that he is "a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." How make reconciliation? By inducing men to repent and forsake their sins and be reconciled to God.

Thus far, we cannot see that we are putting a harsh or forced construction on any of these passages in order to make them harmonize with our hypothesis. They seem to us exactly the strong and glowing terms in which men brought up under the Jewish law would express themselves. Of course, the extent of Christ's influence, through his death, in redeeming the world from sin, is what we cannot measure, neither can we hope to enumerate all the ways in which his blood is made efficacious in the great work of salvation. But we cannot see in any one of these passages taken separately, or in all united, the slightest indication that there was any obstacle in the way of redemption beyond what existed in man's rebellious passions or his unregenerate nature. Such an obstacle may have existed, and Christ's death may in some mysterious way have removed it. But we see in these passages no proof or indication of any such fact. One text referred to in support of this belief, Rom. iv. 25, "Who was delivered for our offences, and *raised again* for our justification," directly asserts that "our justification" is owing, not

to the death, but to the resurrection, of "Jesus our Lord." And another text, Rom. v. 10, while it says nothing of any such obstacle as we have referred to being removed by the blood of Christ, affirms that, while as enemies "we were reconciled to God by the death of his son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be *saved by his life.*"

Does not this last passage state the real office or influence of the death of Christ, as being, not to remove some obstacle in the moral government, but to "reconcile us to God"? Wherever a distinct explanation of the influence of our Saviour's death is given, it harmonizes with this view, and does not include the idea of a vicarious atonement. One of the strongest passages quoted to sustain such an idea is 1 Peter i. 18, 19, — "Redeemed . . . . . with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish, and without spot." But redeemed from what? From the penalty of transgression? Not at all, but "redeemed from your vain conversation," &c. In the chapter following this, v. 24, we read, "Who his own self bare our sins." For what purpose? "That we, being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness." St. Paui has a similar expression, Gal. i. 4, — "Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world."

Even in the Epistle to the Hebrews, where a parallel is run between the old and the new dispensations, we find a similar explanation (Heb. ix. 14), that "the blood of Christ" should "purge your conscience from dead works, to serve the living God." There is one strong passage in St. Paul's writings, Col. i. 24, which would seem to show that the Apostle did not attribute to the sufferings of Christ a meaning entirely different from that which he attached to his own sufferings: — "Whereof I Paul am made a minister; who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is

the Church." "Who in my flesh *fill up that which is lacking* in the sufferings of Christ for his Church."

In the new, therefore, as in the old dispensation, the office of sacrifice, so far as it is explained, is to produce a powerful religious impression on the mind. We hear nothing of it as a means of removing the penalty of sin, except so far as it may be instrumental in reconciling the sinner to God through repentance and newness of life.

There remain two passages which have usually been considered decisive evidence of a vicarious atonement, and which, from the stress that has been laid upon them, as well as from the peculiarity of their phraseology, require to be particularly noticed. The first and most remarkable is Rom. iii. 24–26: —"Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ; whom God hath set forth as a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness; that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." We have here language which at first sight, and in its literal, direct acceptation, would seem not to favor our view. The word translated "propitiation" means "mercy-seat," which in the Jewish sacrifices was sprinkled with blood, as an indication of God's mercy and forgiveness, and his willingness to be propitiated. Now Christ was set forth by his death to be in the new dispensation what the mercy-seat was in the old, an affecting manifestation of God's readiness to forgive the past sins of those who have faith in the blood of Christ, and secure their redemption. But what is the redemption wrought by faith in the blood of Christ? In Hebrews ix. 14 is the answer:—"How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered himself without spot to God, *purge your con-*

science from dead works, *to serve the living God?*" When we are thus purified by faith in the blood of Christ, then God through his "forbearance" forgives our past sins, and we are in such an attitude towards him that he may be just and at the same time justify or accept us. The other passages, 1 John ii. 2 and iv. 10, admit of a similar interpretation, though in these cases the word rendered "propitiation" is literally translated, and therefore more strongly favors the idea of an expiatory sacrifice. These passages, we have said, may be interpreted in conformity with the construction put upon other passages relating to the influence of Christ's death. They contain, we think, no enunciation or definition of a vicarious atonement, sufficiently distinct to authorize us to lay down any particular statement of such a doctrine as a part of our dogmatic theology. We cannot, therefore, whatever our prepossession in its favor, accept it and press it on others as a recognized article of belief.

But around the basis of clearly defined doctrines which constitute our scientific theology, there are doctrines half defined, melting away into mysteries, and yet having something which, we are sure, must be true, and must have a powerful influence upon us. It is so in natural science. The clearly defined and well established principles of physiology are the basis of that science. But the essential element, the principle of vitality, which runs through and lies behind all these principles, giving to them their very being, cannot be analyzed, defined, or distinctly conceived of, even. Every distinct conception that we strive to form of it melts away into mystery. We cannot grasp it either with the intellect or the imagination. It is so in respect to the nature of God. Certain attributes, we know, belong to him, — justice, knowledge, wisdom, love. We know that he is in the fulness of his moral attributes. But when we endeavour to construct a

theory respecting his nature, or to form any conception as to his mode of being, or any image of himself, we are baffled, we are confounded, and can only wonder and adore.

Now, it will not do to say that where our knowledge ends, there is the end of all that can be useful to us. It is what lies beyond our knowledge, — it is a divine love, wisdom, power, reaching out into the unknown depths of God's being, — that awakens our deepest emotions and fills us with wondering adoration and reverence. All our agricultural operations rest on the action of a principle, — the vital element, — that is perfectly incomprehensible to us. Prayer — its influence on our own hearts — must depend very much on our faith in its efficacy with God, though how it may move Him who is without variableness or shadow of turning is all-incomprehensible to us.

To apply these remarks to the subject before us. We believe in the efficacy of prayer, in its propitiatory influence. We attribute to it something almost of a vicarious character. The mother's prayer for her child may be accepted and made instrumental in its salvation after she is dead. The devout lives of good men flow on in channels that we know nothing of, to assist in working out the salvation of men who have no knowledge that they ever lived. The lives of ten righteous men, we are told, would have saved Sodom and Gomorrah from destruction. By the self-sacrificing labors and devotions of holy men, a new element of moral and religious life, we believe, is brought into the world to act on others, not only directly, but indirectly, returning from God with new measures of his grace, like breezes which not only refresh as they pass on, but still more as they return laden with sweetness from the fields which they have visited. Now, if all this may be the effect of our human lives, in connection with prayer and lowly self-sacrifice, how much more

must it be in him whom God hath made "unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption"! We regard Christianity not only as a republication of natural religion, but as the introduction into the world of new spiritual forces. Not only does Christ directly, as a teacher, example, and Saviour, act upon us, but through the agony that was laid upon him, in prayer and suffering, his life and death alike a sacrifice on God's altar, we believe that he has opened the gates of heaven and brought down to us Divine influences essential to our salvation, which otherwise never would have reached the earth. We know not how else to understand the terms in which he and the Apostles spoke of his death and the gift of the Holy Spirit. The annunciation of immortality was a great thing. The authoritative declaration of those sublime truths in the Sermon on the Mount was a great thing. But we do not feel that they are the fulness of him who is all in all to his Church. Beyond all that we distinctly see of his teaching and his works, is an unknown sphere of influence, reaching far into the counsels of the Almighty, and calling down, through the efficacy of his life and death, peculiar helps and mercies for all such as put their trust him.

The precise mode of his action is not declared. Nor can it be distinctly stated as a theological doctrine. But as we read the Gospel and First Epistle of St. John, or the Epistles of Peter and Paul, we cannot free ourselves from the impression, that some essential influence of this kind has been exercised by our Saviour, and that the agony of Gethsemane and of the cross is in some mysterious way, beyond its direct action on our hearts, intimately connected with our salvation. No single expression absolutely requires this interpretation, but the general tone of the whole New Testament is such as to confirm us in this conviction.

What, then, is the difference between us and our brethren of the modern Orthodox school? They distinctly define what the doctrine of the atonement is, and make that particular definition the ground of an important, if not an essential, article of faith. We find in the Scriptures no distinct recognition of the doctrine as thus defined, and believe that the whole subject of an objective or vicarious atonement belongs to that region of spiritual influence which, though intimately connected with our salvation, is wholly beyond our comprehension, and that as a specific doctrine it is in no way important as an article of faith. Faith in Christ, that he has done all that was needed for our redemption, that, as our teacher, our example, our mediator, sacrifice, and intercessor, he has done all that can be done apart from the voluntary offering of ourselves to him, and that we have only to give ourselves up to him with humble and obedient hearts in order to secure our salvation, is with us the faith in Christ, through which the saving efficacy of his grace may be wrought in us, and our calling and election made sure.

1st Series. No. 272.

THE

TWENTY-FIFTH REPORT

OF THE

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION,

INCLUDING A

HISTORY OF THE ASSOCIATION,

WITH THE

ADDRESSES AT THE ANNIVERSARY,

MAY 28, 1850.

BOSTON:
WM. CROSBY AND H. P. NICHOLS,
111 Washington Street.
June, 1850.

Price 5 Cents.

CAMBRIDGE:
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PRINTERS TO THE UNIVERSITY.

TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY.

The Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the American Unitarian Association was celebrated May 28th, 1850.

The business-meeting was held in the chapel of the Church of the Saviour, at 9, A. M., the President in the chair. Rev. Nathaniel Hall offered prayer. The Record of the last annual meeting was read. The Secretary then read the Report of the Executive Committee, which was accepted, and ordered to be printed. The Treasurer's Report was also accepted, and referred to Messrs. J. H. Rogers and G. Merrill to be audited. Messrs. Osgood, Palfrey, Bulfinch, Hawes, and Coolidge were then chosen as a committee of nomination, and they reported the past officers without any change. Upon proceeding to ballot, all the former officers were reëlected unanimously, with the exception of the Secretary; upon a second ballot, Rev. Calvin Lincoln was declared elected, and a vote of thanks was passed to the late Secretary. The meeting was then adjourned to the Federal Street meeting-house, at 7, P. M.

At the public meeting, prayer was offered by Rev. William Mountford of England, and portions of the Report were read by the Secretary. The President then introduced to the meeting Samuel Greele, Esq., who spoke upon "the Association, as an instrument of good for the last twenty-five

years," — Rev. Samuel Osgood, upon "the progress of theological opinion and the religious sentiment among us during this period," — Hon. John G. Palfrey, upon "the character of those who have been worthy and prominent among us," — Rev. H. W. Bellows, upon "the contributions we have made to religious literature, and the influence we have exerted on public opinion," — Rev. R. L. Carpenter, of England, upon "Unitarianism abroad for the last twenty-five years," — and Rev. Edward E. Hale, upon "the present as a starting-point for the future in regard to religious opinion and action," — after which the usual hymn was sung, and the crowded assembly dispersed, at a late hour.

Officers for 1850-51.

PRESIDENT.

Rev. Ezra S. Gannett, D. D.

VICE-PRESIDENTS.

Rev. Samuel K. Lothrop,
Hon. Stephen Fairbanks.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

Rev. James W. Thompson, D. D.,
Isaiah Bangs, Esq.,
Hon. Albert Fearing,
Rev. Alonzo Hill,
Rev. Charles Brooks,
} *Directors.*

Henry P. Fairbanks, Esq., *Treasurer.*
Rev. Calvin Lincoln, *Secretary.*

At a subsequent meeting of the Executive Committee, Rev. Charles Briggs was appointed to perform the duties of Assistant Secretary.

TREASURER'S REPORT.

Statement of the Receipts and Expenditures of the American Unitarian Association from May 29th, 1849, to May 28th, 1850.

RECEIPTS.

Balance in the Treasury, May 29th, 1849, as per account then rendered,		$1,410 96
From Auxiliary Associations and Annual Subscribers,	$1,911 15	
" Societies, by Contribution and Subscription,	6,363 96	
" Societies and Individuals, for Churches needing Aid,	476 00	
" Societies and Individuals, for Missionary Purposes,	265 50	
" Societies and Individuals, for Theological Education,	515 00	
" Societies and Individuals, for the Circulation of Channing's Works and other Books (including receipts for sales),	1,293 95	
" Donations,	403 62	
" Life Members,	480 00	
" Sales of Tracts,	118 36	
" Interest of Permanent Fund,	769 50	
		12,597 04
		$14,008 00

EXPENDITURES.

For Printing and Binding Tracts,	$2,017 25	
" Channing's Works and other Books for Sale and Distribution,	3,657 35	
" Salary of General Secretary,	1,000 00	
" " " Assistant "	500 00	
" Grant to Assistant Secretary, for extra services,	100 00	
" Travelling Expenses of Secretaries, and Expenses and Compensation of Agents,	468 97	
" Rent and Furniture for Office,	421 36	
" Incidental Expenses,	277 43	
		$8,442 36

Amount brought forward, . . .		$8,442 36
For Theological Education, —		
Meadville School, for Salary of Principal, .	$500 00	
" " for Education of Students,	730 00	
		1,230 00
For Missionary Purposes, —		
To Elder Donald Nicholson, for Services,	200 00	
" Rev. William Silsbee, " "	25 00	
" " Peter Betsch, " "	200 00	
" " J. Thurston, " "	10 00	
" " Alvin Coburn, " "	50 00	
" " Herman Snow, " "	100 00	
" " Charles Brooks, " "	20 00	
" " S. J. May, " "	35 00	
" " H. Emmons, " "	25 00	
" " M. De Lange, " "	8 00	
		673 00
For Aid of Unitarian Society in Rockford, Ill.,	200 00	
" " " " Marseilles, Iowa,	100 00	
" " " " Washington, D.C.,	100 00	
" " " " North'berland, Pa.,	100 00	
" " " " Vernon, N. Y.,	150 00	
" " " " Troy, "	10 00	
" " " " Athol, Mass.,	100 00	
" " " " Greenfield, "	100 00	
" " " " Montague, "	150 00	
" " Church of the Pilgrims, in Lowell, "	200 00	
" " Building a Church in Lawrence, "	200 00	
" " Unitarian Society in Westboro', "	40 00	
" " " " Southboro', "	50 00	
" " " " Sudbury, "	50 00	
" " " " W. Newton, "	150 00	
" " " " Sharon, "	50 00	
" " Railroad Church in Quincy, "	100 00	
" " Indiana St. Society in Boston, "	100 00	
" " Unitarian Society in Thomaston, Me.,	200 00	
" " " " Feltville, N. J.,	50 00	
		2,200 00
		12,545 36
Balance on hand, . . .		1,462 64
		$14,008 00

Er. Ex.

H. P. FAIRBANKS, *Treasurer.*

Boston, May 28th, 1850.

The following sums have been appropriated, but not yet drawn from the Treasury, viz.: —

For the Education of Students at Meadville,	$1,500 00
" " Salary of Rev. Prof. Folsom at Meadville,	300 00
" Aid of Unitarian Society at Tremont, Ill.,	150 00
" " " " " Lockport, Ill.,	100 00
" " " " " Cannelton, Ia.,	200 00
" " " " " Southington, Ct.,	100 00
" " " " " Brooklyn, Ct.,	150 00
" " " " " Windsor, Vt.,	100 00
" " " " " Bucksport, Me.,	100 00
" " " " " Dennis, Mass.,	50 00
	$2,750 00

Boston, June 1, 1850. The undersigned have examined the foregoing accounts, and find them to be correctly cast and properly vouched.

GEORGE MERRILL, }
JOHN H. ROGERS, } *Auditors.*

REPORT OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

As a quarter of a century in the history of our Association is completed to-day, it seems natural to review our course through the years that have closed, compare our original promise with its present fulfilment, contrast our means and efforts at the beginning with the same at this maturer period, estimate the extent of the trusts conferred and our fidelity in their discharge, and draw forth admonition or encouragement, a word of warning, of hope, or of rebuke, as we may appear in the calm review to have been true or false to the impulse given by such spirits as Channing, Bancroft, Ware, Whitman, Story, and the friends now remaining among us to counsel and cheer.

Just ten years after the line of separation began to be drawn in New England, and the system of exclusion to make itself felt, and at the very moment of the organization of a similar society in England, the idea of this Association was made public at the Berry Street Conference, May, 1825, and it was voted, unanimously, that it was expedient to form a society to be called the American Unitarian Association. This was on the afternoon of Wednesday of Anniversary week, twenty-five years ago. The next morning an adjourned meeting was held, the constitution reported by

a committee adopted, and Rev. Aaron Bancroft, D. D., elected President, Rev. E. S. Gannett, Secretary, Rev. H. Ware, Jr., James Walker, and Samuel Barrett, Directors, L. Tappan, Esq., Treasurer, with nine Vice-Presidents, the first upon the list being Hon. Joseph Story. The same officers continued from year to year until the illness of Mr. Ware, in 1829, occasioned a vacancy in the Board of Directors, when Rev. Francis Parkman succeeded him. The other Presidents, it may be mentioned, have been Rev. Dr. Channing, who was elected but declined serving, Rev. Dr. Nichols, Judge Story, Rev. Dr. Dewey, and Dr. Gannett.

The object of the Association was sufficiently set forth in a circular addressed to the several parish committees. "The American Unitarian Association has been established from a persuasion that the time has arrived when it is necessary for those who profess the simple unity of God to adopt measures differing in some respects from those which they have hitherto pursued"; that is to say, to make a "more systematic union and a concentration of labors by which interest may be awakened, confidence inspired, and efficiency produced. The want of union among Christians of our denomination is felt to be a great evil by those who have given attention to this subject. Living in an age of unusual religious excitement, surrounded by numerous sects, all of which are sedulously employed in disseminating their peculiar tenets, we should be wanting in duty to ourselves, and be doing injustice to the doctrines we profess, if we should allow them to fail in exercising their due influence for want of a corresponding zeal and interest. Our exertions have not been apparent because insulated; and the contributions of many of our friends have been thrown into the treasuries of other denominations, from the want of some

proper object upon which they could be bestowed. We feel confident that there are among us men of zeal and energy, who are both willing and able to exert themselves in the cause of religion; and that others who are now indifferent to the subject might by sympathy and encouragement be excited to similar exertions. All that is required is, that they may be brought together, and be made acquainted with each other's views and feelings; that they may be allowed to unite their labors in one common field and for one common end; and thereby warm each other's hearts and strengthen each other's hands. To produce this concert among Unitarians is one of the objects of the American Unitarian Association."

This appeal was kindly but not warmly met. Our churches were disposed to wait and see in what spirit the new society was to be conducted before they committed themselves to its support. Our pastors in some cases were disinclined to associated action, from the evils they had seen connected with it, — the sectarianism, bitterness, tyranny, perversion of funds, and exaltation of opinion over morality, — in other quarters. The first annual meeting, at Pantheon Hall, near the Boylston Market, was not very fully attended. Only nine life-members were obtained the first year; of the sixty-five annual subscribers in Boston, forty-three were from one church, then newly organized, whose pastor has recently celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of his settlement. Only two hundred dollars were appropriated to missions, half of it to the Rev. James Kay, of Northumberland, and the other half to the neighbouring society at the capital of Pennsylvania. Nearly two hundred dollars were invested in tracts, two thousand sometimes constituting the edition. The receipts in round numbers were thirteen hun-

dred dollars, and the expenditures less than half that sum, or five hundred sixty-two dollars and seventy-four cents.

From the undecided feeling of the religious public towards the experiment, the inexperience of its conductors as to the best field of effort, and the lack of extensive correspondence or acquaintance with the country at large, the first Report had more the tone of inquiry and hope, than of distinct purpose and determined plan. Neither the number of Liberal Christians was at all known, nor the comparative wants of different places, nor the facilities for action, nor the attitude of other religious bodies towards our own, nor the possibility of harmonious effort among ourselves.

Yet two significant hints are given in the earliest printed document laid before the Association at its anniversary; — one, of the existence of the Christian Connection, concerning whom Rev. M. G. Thomas was then engaged in obtaining intelligence; — the other, of the necessity of a Ministry to the Poor in large cities, which afterwards, in the hands of Messrs. Tuckerman and Barnard, was aided by more than six thousand dollars from our funds.

An encouraging circumstance, to which we have alluded, met the effort at its very birth. Without any concert, and in entire ignorance of each other's motions, a like Association was formed in England on the same day, for the same end, bearing the broader title of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, and encountered by the same doubt, indifference, and half-avowed dread, which so much obstructed our way.

Gradually, a valuable, extended, instructive, and constantly increasing correspondence sprang up, Unitarian societies and scattered brethren of the like faith became aware of each other's existence, the desire for union and effort which

really originated our society was quickened, extended, and deepened by its existence, and the power of dissociating influences began reluctantly to give way, an increased zeal for pure and undefiled religion was promoted, and another part of the body of Christ prepared to show the vitality necessary to continuance as well as to growth. At the first annual meeting, Judge Story, Hon. Leverett Saltonstall, Rev. Dr. Nichols, Rev. Henry Colman, — men not to be suspected of a sectarian spirit, not tainted with a narrow aim, — addressed the assembly in earnest advocacy of the Association. The formation of auxiliaries was strongly recommended, — the hope of issuing tracts semi-monthly was indulged. Mr. Thomas reported in favor of establishing a church at Cincinnati, containing then but fifteen thousand inhabitants. It was plainly a day of preparation and promise. The beginning, whenever made, required to be made just so. The first period of our history was necessarily Protestant, controversial, doctrinal, defensive, wearing a negative as much as a positive face. Not that this was desired by the gifted minds who gave this impulse, nor designed by any as the fixed position of the Liberal churches of New England. Finding their most sacred rights rudely assailed, their spiritual freedom endangered, bitter prejudices excited against what they believed truth, and the best of men wounded in the tenderest part, they were obliged to stand up manfully for "the faith once delivered to the saints." Dr. Channing's remarks at the fourth anniversary indicate the state of things, when he declared, that "great firmness was necessary in bearing testimony to Unitarian Christianity, was due to the cause of religion and intellectual freedom. With this cause Unitarianism was closely connected. It was a system hallowed and pervaded by the spirit of in-

quiry. Through this it had been restored, after a long night, to the world, and to this it was devoted. Other denominations had the name, among Unitarians it was a reality. Most Protestant sects were aiming to precipitate creeds framed in the darkness of the sixteenth century, if not in darker ages, — to stop the human mind where it is, to arrest its upward and forward movements. Among Unitarians there was an earnest desire for clearer light, a striving for wider and nobler views. Freedom and progress were their watchwords. The attempts to suppress Unitarianism were of a character which the friends of Christian and intellectual freedom ought to abhor and must withstand. No doctrine, true or false, should be suppressed by tyrannical means; such means, unhappily, are combined against Unitarianism. There is a coalition extending far and wide to put it down, — to put down an opinion by joint clamor, by joint wealth, by joint appeals to the passions of the ignorant, by exciting an odium which might prejudice the dearest interests of its advocates by overwhelming them with a torrent of public scorn. No matter in this view whether Unitarianism be true or false. It must not and it shall not be put down in this way."

And this Association was a prominent instrument in preventing the extinction of light, the overthrow of freedom. Its tracts were issued by thousands at a time on such subjects as "Causes of the Progress of Liberal Christianity," "Unitarianism Vindicated," "Tests of True Religion," "The Exclusive System"; they were circulated from Maine to Georgia by faithful agencies; a small, as well as a large, series was put forth; about three hundred dollars' worth were ordered at one time in England; one was even translated into a native dialect of India: and the same diffi-

culty was experienced then as now, the difficulty of procuring original essays adapted to our immediate wants, — the same promise was given of a biographical series, which we have never commenced upon till this year, — the same hope was entertained then as now of devoting our energies to the issue of earnest addresses on spiritual religion.

This was the earliest period of the Association, — a period not wholly past, — not everywhere forgotten. For as long as there is prejudice to be encountered, and bigotry to be enlightened, a rancorous hostility to be surmounted, and a deep-seated dread to be removed, there must be *doctrinal* discussion, — the vindication of truth against error, the struggle, often severe and doubtful, of light with darkness. Such persons as expressed amazement because our earliest preacher at Louisville used a Bible, or at Baltimore wondered that Unitarians professed to believe in a God, require enlightenment, the generous and conciliating exhibition of what we believe, the faithful and fearless statement of what neither Christ nor conscience permits us to believe. In reviewing this period of discussion and inquiry, none will presume to say that our Association failed of advancing the purposes for which it was instituted. With sadly limited funds, and only the occasional services of busily occupied clergymen, with few missionary stations and almost no missionaries, with a chilling prejudice and an unrelenting opposition to encounter, through its influence and that of the quickened spirits working with us in every walk of life, the neglected but fundamental doctrine of the Divine Unity was vindicated, the love of God freed from the darkening shadow of creeds, man's capacity, duty, and destiny established on the ground of Scripture and reason, and the more general truths of our religion impressively set forth; new so-

cieties started up, more rapidly than it was possible to supply them with preachers; the Divinity School increased its list of students in 1830 to forty-five; and more than one friend, like the late George Bond, whom we can never name without honor, confessed that, having opposed the institution at the first, they were now satisfied of its efficacy. During the first ten years about thirteen tracts were issued annually, making in some of the best years a total of 127,000 copies in twelve months; of which over eight hundred dollars' worth were sometimes sold in the year, and not in New England alone.

The creation of a very efficient auxiliary in the year 1827 must not be passed over in silence. The young men of the city united in a "Christian Book and Pamphlet Society," for the purpose of distributing gratuitously the publications of this Association, such devotional and practical books as could be obtained at a very reduced rate, pamphlets, journals, and hymn-books, contributed by generous friends for the South and West. This well-directed effort has never been abandoned, though it has sometimes languished for lack of means; during the last nine years it has circulated over eighty-three thousand pamphlets and forty-five hundred books, making about ten thousand separate publications distributed per year, — or two hundred and thirty thousand for the whole period of its existence.

Other excellent institutions followed in the wake of our organization, and were somewhat prompted by it. In April, 1827, the superintendents and teachers of the Boston Sunday School, with other persons friendly to the cause, with the view of mutual encouragement and greater efficiency, united themselves under the name of the Sunday School Society. The first year it connected with itself thirty schools

out of the city; in 1829, fifty-eight schools, twenty-four of which commenced in the spring of that year. These fifty-eight schools reported 5,885 children and 890 teachers, making with the schools in Boston, in December, 1829, a total of 6,809 pupils, and 1,122 teachers. In all but five of these there were libraries, ranging from one hundred to eight hundred volumes, making in the whole eleven thousand Sunday-school books. In 1835, 135 schools reported themselves to the Society, containing 2,338 teachers, and 13,795 pupils. The united amount of books in their libraries was 31,661. Within the last ten years, the number of scholars has doubled, and the libraries more than doubled.

In the August after our first anniversary, Divinity Hall at Cambridge was dedicated; about the same date the Purchase Street church was commenced, preparations were made for the one now worshipping under Rev. F. D. Huntington, the Baltimore society recovered from serious embarrassment, the second church in New York was dedicated, "The Liberal Preacher" was announced, and Dr. Tuckerman's ministry was introduced among the poor of the city.

All the while, in the midst of this frame of sound doctrine a heart of love was beating, an interest in humanity, in the tempted and fallen, the neglected and oppressed, yearning to utter itself in significant deeds. And in the Ministry at Large the Association found a worthy agency, in Joseph Tuckerman a worthy agent. The November of 1826 began a connection of this work with our Association which lasted for eight years. The first Report of his mission was issued with their Second Annual Report; the next were issued by us as distinct pamphlets, and as such have nearly disappeared; for the four latter years of the union, they took their place in our series as monthly tracts; until, more la-

borers entering into the field, and the labor winning continually more of the favor of the community, it became necessary to sustain it upon a basis of its own; and the Fraternity of Churches, in 1834, succeeded to the charge which had been intrusted to this Association during the weakness of its own infancy. As a notice of the founder of this mission, similar to those of Worcester, Greenwood, Channing, and the Wares, has not been taken in our publications, we may well pause a moment to refresh ourselves by the recollection of a most single-minded and self-sacrificing philanthropist. It was in the exhaustion produced by years of teaching that the American missionary to prisons began her remarkable labors among the criminal and the insane; it was when failing health obliged him to relinquish a mutually attached church, that Tuckerman, quickened by the entire sympathy and cheered by the zealous coöperation of William Ellery Channing, offered the Gospel without money and without price to the poor of a crowded city, becoming to them, irrespectively of creed, color, place of worship, age, sex, or nation, not only the spiritual guide and Christian comforter, but the temporal adviser and charitable almoner whom they needed less, yet were more ready to welcome. The whole character of the missionary characterizes his mission. His object was not to set at work a new engine of mere alms-giving, nor to impart our peculiar theology to the less intelligent members of the community, nor to gather into distinct congregations those whom poverty prevented from contributing to the support of worship, and inferiority of attire disabled from entering existing churches; — it was to act out the brotherhood of man, to break down the partition-walls of rank, to open wide the gates of Christian sympathy, that rich and poor, cultivated

and ignorant, prosperous and wretched, hopeful and desponding, should become helpers one of another; that the one should understand, feel, relieve, prevent, the sufferings and temptations of the other; that good fortune should find in misfortune a call of God and Christ to effort, and that poverty should recognize in wealth a friend instead of an oppressor, ready, in the spirit of the good Samaritan, to cheer, and counsel, and comfort, and save. This appears from some of Dr. Channing's letters to have been *his* idea of *our* peculiar mission; this was the key-note of Dr. Tuckerman's life. He had once intended to offer himself as a missionary to the heathen; at another, the forlorn condition of the seamen enlisted his efforts; but as he became absorbed in the city mission, his soul grew from day to day, his preaching became eloquent, his conversation impressive, his daily life remarkable, his spirit fervent as an apostle's, generous as a martyr's. From the moment he began thus to "remember the forgotten," as his ministry was beautifully described, there was nothing else before his eyes, nothing else on his tongue, but how to save these lost sheep of the house of Israel. He did not seek fame, but it sought him in his lowly walks of mercy; he did not ask to be remembered, but not only will the grateful hearts of those to whom he was a ministering spirit ever cherish his name, — an institution will remain, which Judge Story pronounced "one of the most glorious triumphs of Christianity over the reluctant doubts of public opinion." Dr. Tuckerman's interest in his work so far exceeded his strength, was so evidently costing him his life, that he was indeed a sacrifice to the cause. Though always slender, he could not stint himself to that amount of labor which his feeble frame would endure; warned again and again by friends and physicians, he could not be satis-

fied to retire from any possible service to humanity; and he went on in a martyr's spirit to over-fatigue, increasing debility, premature old age, utter prostration, and a painful, yet triumphant death. Like every other true Christian work, his mission grew upon him, and has ever continued to grow, making one cheering fact amidst our increasing social exposure, breathing the noble conception of a thorough evangelization of society, weaving together anew the warp and woof of city humanity, bringing the energetic to inspire the depressed, the fortunate to cheer the heart-stricken, the wise to enlighten the foolish, and all together to befriend the stranger, shield the young, succour the tempted, raise the fallen.

It may be a question, *which* received the more from the union, — whether the success secured by our steadfast support of the novel enterprise, endangered at first by the frequent illness of Dr. T. and the general misapprehension of his purpose, was a greater favor conferred, than the blessing enjoyed by ourselves in the philanthropic spirit shed through the Association, — the fame fairly won by its success, — the lead which it took of other like efforts in other denominations and other lands, — the demonstration made before the world of a disinterested, unsectarian, philanthropic spirit in an Association apparently narrow and limited.

Not the least interesting news which cheers us from abroad is the constant increase of this ministry among our brethren in England. The very year after Dr. Tuckerman's visit to the mother country, the Unitarians of London formed the Domestic Mission of that city, the beginning of many similar enterprises among Protestants of every name. The number of laborers in this field among our English brethren at present is ten, two of them being stationed in

London, two in Birmingham, and one each at Bristol, Halifax, Leeds, Manchester, and Liverpool. In the last-named city the labor seems peculiarly severe, and even perilous. The late Mr. Johns fell a sacrifice to his humanity there; a dead body required to be carried forth from among the crowded living to interment; and, no one else being willing to encounter the peril of removing a mass of pestilence, the Protestant and Catholic missionaries united in the task, and paid the penalty of philanthropy with their lives.

The Report of 1832 gives striking evidence of the increase of the Association. In the beginning a salaried officer, devoted to the interests of the body, was not thought of. There were no means to sustain, and little work to occupy, an exclusive agent of the society: jealousy prevented many parishes from accepting the visits of such an official; there were but a score or two of Auxiliaries to be addressed; the correspondence was hardly a hundredth part of the present; except for this city, regular missionaries could not be had; and the limited circulation of tracts went on chiefly through a few booksellers here and abroad. The Seventh Annual Report declares that "the Association is not accomplishing the good it might and ought; that feeble societies need visits of sympathy and encouragement, our views require able exposition in new places, our operations demand more system, comprehensiveness, and energy."

There was a general concurrence of sentiment regarding the next important step of advance; all agreed that the Association, having shown itself free from the besetting sins of ecclesiastical organizations, should be permitted to go to work in earnest through an agent devoted to its service. Meeting after meeting was held to procure funds for the support of this officer; the young men of Boston contributed

about two thousand dollars; one of the youngest churches in the city gave more than this amount; a generous merchant in Salem sent five hundred dollars. The Rev. E. S. Gannett was unanimously elected Secretary. Rev. C. C. Sewall was the next choice, Rev. Bernard Whitman the third; and these declining, Rev. Jason Whitman was induced to become the General Secretary, but resigned the situation the following year for one more congenial to his health and taste, as pastor of a new society at Portland. Rev. Charles Briggs was chosen his successor, and has continued his connection with the Association to this hour. Mr. Whitman addressed but thirty parishes in behalf of our cause; he formed five Auxiliaries and revived three; his labors were confined to this part of New England, and were relinquished because neither the work was so encouraging nor the field so open as he had reason to expect. The labors of his successor have covered over all the maturer and more useful years of the Association, have led the institution forward to high ground as a missionary body, by unfailing patience have prevailed over every discouragement, by inexhaustible hope have surmounted serious obstacles, by the most persuasive gentleness have conciliated opposition, — and have done, perhaps, as much as could be asked of sound judgment, knowledge of mankind, and devotion to the cause, with the drawback of a slender and failing frame.

In 1845 it was determined to create a new office, that of Travelling Agent, with a salary of a thousand dollars, to visit the societies generally, awaken more interest in missionary effort, revive drooping churches, and raise more funds for the Association; and Mr. George G. Channing entered upon this office, obtained valuable intelligence, recovered several decayed congregations, enlarged our finances,

and imparted much of his energy to the places which he visited. At the anniversary of 1847, however, Rev. W. G. Eliot was elected General Secretary, the salary fixed at two thousand dollars, and the office of Travelling Agent was discontinued; but after a lapse of some months, owing to his absence from the country, the office was declined by him, and Rev. F. W. Holland was appointed Secretary, and Rev. C. Briggs, Assistant, from the first of January, 1848, with a salary for the united offices of only fifteen hundred dollars. As the Association enlarged its work and was obliged to assume greater responsibilities, it became necessary to place it upon a firmer footing by an act of incorporation. And the Legislature of Massachusetts, having granted the power to "hold real and personal estate to the value of fifty thousand dollars," and provided that "all donations, devises, and bequests of real and personal estate" to us "shall enure to the use and benefit of the corporation hereby created," the act was unanimously adopted at a legal meeting held in the chapel of the Church of the Saviour, on June 3d, 1847, and suitable By-laws were also passed. The third and fourth of these laws made an essential change in the Association as a working instrument. Instead of a President, who was merely an honorary officer, and fifteen Vice-Presidents, some of whom resided at a great distance, the President, with two Vice-Presidents, was to make part of the Executive Committee, and attend its business-meetings, — which have occurred this year nearly every fortnight. By this change a new energy has been imparted to our efforts, a higher moment to our deliberations. The sanction of the Board to any act or plan has not expressed merely the opinion of three or more Directors; it comes before our public under the authority and with the approbation of the higher officers of the

Corporation, and is recommended by their judgment and experience.

The Nineteenth Annual Report presented the first tidings of the Meadville School, and the next year (1845) gave the guarantee by our Association of the salary of its Principal, and circulated extensively the programme of the institution. H. J. Huidekoper, Esq., purchased a vacant Presbyterian church, and adapted it to the wants of theological classes by forming a chapel, lecture-rooms, and library; his son, a graduate of the Cambridge Divinity School, freely devoted to it his whole time; Rev. Messrs. Hosmer and Millard engaged to give each a course of lectures during the summer; and a New England pastor, of remarkable energy, adaptedness, and love of labor, was induced, by the pledged support of the Association, to crown the enterprise with success by becoming its responsible leader, its prompting and pervading spirit. The first class numbered nine, less than half of whom were of our own body, and some of whom had already been preachers of the Word. It soon appeared, that, although a sufficient library had been gathered by the energy of Rev. F. Huidekoper, and the Christian Connection seemed willing to furnish men to this free institution, there was urgent need of beneficiary assistance; and several of our churches came forward to assist individuals of whom they obtained knowledge through the Association. We were then called upon to assist in rendering this noble charity effective, by becoming responsible for the support of such students as could not otherwise remain at the School. And to this appeal, as to every previous one, a prompt and generous answer was returned. With the sympathy thus expressed by the Association, this institution has continued to increase in numbers, reputation, ability, and influence. Last

summer, Rev. N. S. Folsom went out to take charge of the Meadville church, thus relieving Prof. Stebbins of part of his duties, — and to teach New Testament hermeneutics in the Theological School, thus relieving Prof. Huidekoper of part of his burden. During the last year the Association has far exceeded its former bounty to this School of the prophets. It has obtained from Portland friends enough to complete Prof. Folsom's salary, with the two hundred dollars subscribed by clergymen, chiefly of this city. It has supplied fifty dollars to every student needing such assistance, and larger sums in certain cases requiring unusual help. It offers for the next year to aid *thirty young men with fifty dollars each*, and still a larger number, if more present themselves desiring our help in their preparation for a missionary ministry. Already a number have arrived at Meadville to form a new class, and the prospects are so encouraging for the future, that it is proposed to erect a building like Divinity Hall at Cambridge for the better accommodation of the students.

Having spoken of the first or *controversial* period of our history, and next of the *philanthropic*, it remains to notice a third manifestation, the *spiritual* and *devotional*, — that which does not so much battle for opinion, nor war upon social abuses, as reveal the inner heart of our faith, breathe forth our Master's spirit afresh, look to God in love as well as obedience, and walk with man, not as a teacher or benefactor so much as a fellow-immortal, seeking the same heaven, preparing to meet the same Judge. Eight years ago this change was predicted. Many of the favorite writings of Henry Ware, Jr., his chief pulpit efforts, and his vast personal influence, were given to lead our churches on from the truth to the life as it is in Jesus, from the thoory to the

spirit of a loving faith and a prayerful self-consecration; and many others labored with him, and are yet laboring, not in imitation of any other bodies of believers, but in hearty sympathy with the primitive Church, and a hope to share its zeal as well as its truths. It was the same leaven which worked in us from the first, that, last winter and the winter before, moved the Association to institute conference and prayer meetings in this city, and by its influence encourage and animate other places to the same gatherings of fervent hearts for mutual counsel, sympathy, and prayer. There was nothing forced, imitated, inconsistent with any avowed opinion or the general order of our congregations, in this movement. The delightful evening meetings upon fourteen successive Sundays of the previous year, and upon several Wednesday evenings of this, were craved by a portion of our people, and contributed to the refreshment and extension of our churches. This season the meetings had less prominence in consequence of the Sunday evenings being occupied by fourteen lectures, prompted by the last winter Conferences, on the Relations of Christian Doctrine to Personal Religion, delivered on successive Sunday evenings in the Church of the Saviour, in Bedford Street. The introductory was by Rev. E. S. Gannett, upon the Importance of Opinions as the basis of a religious life. The 2d, by Rev. E. Peabody, on God, — his holiness, sovereignty, paternity. The 3d, by Rev. C. A. Bartol, on Christ, — his mission, character, mediation. The 4th, by Rev. J. Young, on Man, — his nature, condition, destiny. The 5th, on Sin, — its origin, properties, effects, by Rev. J. I. T. Coolidge. The 6th, on Regeneration, — its necessity, methods, results, by Rev. C. Robbins. The 7th, on Christian Growth, — faith its root, effort its law, perfection its end, by Rev. R. C. Wa-

terston. The 8th, on Divine Help, — ordinary, special, immediate, by Rev. S. K. Lothrop. The 9th, on Spiritual Life, — in the closet, in the church, in the world, by Rev. F. T. Gray. The 10th, on the Bible, — an authority, a study, and a blessing, by Rev. E. S. Gannett. The 11th, on Life, — a trust, a discipline, an achievement, by Rev. T. S. King. The 12th, on Society, — its constitution, its influence, its claims, by Rev. F. D. Huntington. The 13th, on Immortality, — the inheritance of man, the revelation of the Gospel, the continuation of progress, by T. B. Fox. The 14th, on Retribution, — its certainty, its nature, its importance, by Rev. S. Barrett. These lectures were very fully attended, gave general satisfaction, interested many besides our own members, their publication was called for by secular papers of the city, and, considering the extent of ground they covered and the variety of minds they enlisted, they may be regarded as eminently successful. To have failed either of interesting and calling out our public, or of presenting exercises of an earnest and quickening character, would have been a lamentable yielding up of the high ground occupied by us the previous winter. During this holy week, a great accession of interest is obtained from the Conference meetings held on four successive mornings in different parts of the city, where crowded assemblies gather, not to be roused by eloquence, instructed by learning, or reasoned out of error, so much as to quicken the life that is in them and kindle it anew in other hearts, — by the earnest appeal, the word of warning or of cheer, the heart-breathed hymn, the fervent prayer to get and to give life, — to shed abroad the love of Jesus and welcome in the Spirit of God.

This kindling of a higher flame of devotion in our midst

has imparted fresh zeal for the cause of missions, and a new interest in doing good generally. It has emancipated many from the chilling dread of being over-zealous; it has opened and will open more and more fountains of living streams to make glad the city of our God; it is leading us to a more affirmative faith, and securing to us a higher place in all true Christians' hearts. The influence of this increased spirituality is seen in the more earnest tone of all our journals and pulpits, in the larger sale of devotional books, and the kinder appreciation of our spirit by other denominations. We need greatly the right kind of books and tracts to help on this blessed work; it would be hard to render a greater service to spiritual religion than to issue another book like the "Formation of Christian Character," and cause it to be circulated far and near without stint or limit, — or another memoir like that of Peabody, or another "Saints' Rest" or "Pilgrim's Progress" adapted to the advanced state of theology and the increased necessities of our times.

Having thus reviewed the progress of the Association through two stages of growth into a third, now quietly opening before us, it is necessary to sum up the work of the past quarter of a century, add to it the present year's account, and breathe a few hopes for the future. In the earlier years of the Association no systematic effort was made to raise funds; there was no urgent and extended call for help; and no officer existed until Mr. Whitman's day to take the business of collection, and of visiting the churches for this purpose, into his exclusive charge. Of course, our receipts were small, irregular, and from a very limited circle of friends. By far the greater part of our funds have been drawn from this city, and from half a dozen societies in it.

The smallest sum ever received was in the first year, — less than thirteen hundred dollars; the largest was in 1846, — about thirteen thousand dollars. This year falls but a little short of our best success, amounting as it does to more than twelve thousand dollars, or four times the average of the earlier period of our Association; and yet it is hardly a fourth part of what a more fervent piety would make it easy for us to give. The average of the receipts of ten years is, from the sale of tracts, two hundred and twenty-eight dollars per year; from life-memberships, three hundred and ninety-five; from the permanent fund, seven hundred and thirty-three; and from auxiliaries and contributions, two thousand seven hundred and thirty-five dollars. The churches assisted by the American Unitarian Association, many of which must have been abandoned but for foreign aid, are nearly a hundred, and are distributed as follows: — thirty-seven in Massachusetts, nineteen South and West, eleven in New York State, ten in Maine, six in New Hampshire, five in Connecticut, three in Vermont, and two in Pennsylvania, — ninety-three in all; some of them saved from certain extinction by our instrumentality, and many of them stimulated to pay off their debts and otherwise improve their condition by the promise of our aid. Nor does this give any idea of the numbers every year assisted by our different Secretaries to procure funds, obtain pastors, continue or renew worship, and otherwise improve their condition. Of many such favors, neither those who enjoy them nor the public at large know by whom they were obtained. The number of tracts issued cannot be accurately computed, because the records do not always inform us of the size of the edition; but they have been in editions varying from two thousand to eight thousand copies, — prob-

ably averaging, with the re-issues, not less than six thousand each, — making a sum total of one million seven hundred and sixty-four thousand, or seventy thousand per year. It is not possible to arrange them all under distinct heads; but it may be stated generally, that, of the two hundred and seventy-two tracts of the large series, there have been one hundred and thirteen practical, and ninety-three doctrinal tracts; of the doctrinal, nearly half have been upon the Divine Unity, one sixth upon the Atonement, five upon the Ordinances, ten on Regeneration, four on Human Nature, three on Retribution, and two on the Holy Spirit; besides thirty-seven Reports and twenty-nine miscellaneous tracts, — making in all twenty-three volumes. The cost of our tracts varies greatly, but the average is about a cent and a half each, and for each tract reprinted from stereotype plates, half this amount.

In comparing the Association now with its early promise, it is obvious to remark, that no institution of so high aim reaches its end, — that it is enough for it to fill its place faithfully, and bear its rightful share of the mission of Christian mercy to mankind. None can question our progress, and none, on the other hand, can suppose it as rapid as might have been expected and hoped. In 1826 there was not a single Unitarian society west of Pennsylvania, and our churches in that State drew a flickering and doubtful breath, two of their golden candlesticks even going out in darkness; now, we have well-established societies in the principal towns along the line of travel, through the middle of Illinois, upon the Chicago and Galena Railroad, along the Ohio River, and upon the Mississippi itself, though two of them are a thousand miles apart, and several are destitute of preachers. Nay, the standard inscribed at our anniversary with

the words "Liberty, Holiness, Love," now floats to the breeze in an island of the Pacific, and waits but the convenience of a house of worship to give to California a finer gold than its mines can yield. From a postage in early times of a few dollars per year, we have risen to more than thirty dollars per quarter; from the occasional services of a busy pastor, to the mutual counsel and divided tasks of two secretaries. In place of an irregular tract of perhaps two thousand copies, we now issue twelve per year, in the three forms of essay, narrative, and biography, and in editions of not less than seven thousand. From the doubtful and tentative process with which the way was worked out towards manhood, we have three well-defined departments of action, each pursued by its committee, with the valuable experience of a quarter of a century, and the encouragement of much success, not to say the warning of some failure.

Immediately after the annual meeting, the Executive Committee proceeded to put into execution, and have continued strenuously to pursue, the plan of operations recommended by the Association at that time. The Committee was divided into three sub-committees, to each of which, as subjects belonging to its particular department arose, they were referred; while a final decision was reserved for the full Board at its regular meetings. In reviewing the work of the past year, it is natural to consider it in regard to these three departments, — namely, General Business, Publications, Missions. And with regard to general business; — in section ninth of the sub-committee's report accepted last year, the necessity of a larger and more respectable office was forcibly urged. The first business of this year was an arrangement by which, with slight increase of ex-

pense, our former rooms were extended, and excellent and abundant accommodation procured, at once easy of access, quiet, lightsome, and airy, — an improvement gratefully acknowledged by all whom business, convenience, or kindliness gathers around the head-quarters of our faith. This Committee has also given attention to the formation of a Unitarian library at the Association rooms; the Committee beg leave respectfully, to invite our authors and publishers to place a copy of each of their theological or religious publications where they will be accessible during all hours of the day to all our friends.

The Business Committee also gave attention to the eighth suggestion in the sub-committee's report adopted at the last anniversary. Immediately after the anniversary, they endeavoured "to enlarge the pecuniary resources and moral efficiency of the Association, and by the visits of the Secretary, by correspondence, and by public meetings," strove to make our means worthy of our cause. This recommendation has been most faithfully and energetically carried out, with what results the Treasurer's report shows. Rev. Calvin Lincoln rendered excellent service in renewing public interest in the Association, especially in Plymouth County; the Secretary has extended his visits and multiplied his labors more than before; during the autumn a convention was held by us in Springfield, where a prompt and generous contribution was made to the missionary fund; and a series of meetings were held during the winter in this city, which resulted in a general movement in our behalf among the neighbouring churches. In Manchester, N. H., a similar meeting has just been held, which by its earnest spirit cannot fail to be widely and permanently felt.

Our Book department has been unusually and unremitting-

ly active. First, in gratuitous distribution. All the theological schools and colleges which were unsupplied have received through our instrumentality Norton's "Genuineness of the Gospels," in three volumes, the gift of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, Piety, and Charity, and Jay's and Livermore's Reviews of the Mexican War, from the Peace Society, together with a supply of our recent tracts. The publisher of Dr. Channing's Works presented to us one hundred and ten blemished volumes of that invaluable work, which were bound in the cheapest way, and presented to destitute clergymen at the West. When it was known that they were to be obtained merely at the price of transportation, applications came sometimes from three unsupplied clergymen in a day; and at the cost of about nine dollars we have been enabled to furnish sixty preachers with light, impulse, encouragement, and joy. Our own tracts have been more sought after than ever, especially the children's series. The New York Unitarian Association, the Book and Pamphlet Society, the Ministry at Large, Western ministers, of the Christian Connection and of our own body, besides newly organized societies, have drawn upon us so continually, that, though the size of our editions has been increased and nine tracts have been reprinted, even the Annual Report disappeared from our shelves, and the little tales were gone before they had found a place in the Depository. Besides this, country and city friends have poured in of their abundance hymn-books, well-worn Sunday-school libraries, and books of devotion, as well as others of a more general character, — enabling the Secretary to commence a dozen new Sabbath schools without expense to any one, and to supply ten societies with the necessaries of social worship. Three bundles of such presents have

frequently been despatched westward in a single day, and no such application is denied, though our exhausted stock and our entire destitution of several of the old tracts oblige us to be prudent, while we would gladly be generous.

But the great work of this year has been the sale of Dr. Channing's Works and Life, Peabody's Lectures and Memoir, the Sermons on Christian Communion, Livermore's Commentary, and Bartol's Discourses, through sixty-eight friends, who have acted for a longer or shorter time as our agents and *colporteurs*. Eleven hundred sets of the six volume edition of Dr. Channing's Works, and fifteen hundred of the Doctrinal Lectures of A. P. Peabody, have been purchased by the Association, and through the best hands and feet which could be anywhere found have been carried to the following places: — San Francisco, Honolulu, New Orleans, St. Louis, Burlington in Iowa, Burlington in Wisconsin, and Burlington in Vermont, Quincy, Ill., Galena, Milwaukie, Marseilles, Geneva, Tremont, Rockford, Chicago, Louisville, Cincinnati, Marietta, Wheeling, Northumberland, Detroit, Cleveland, Buffalo, Syracuse, Montreal, Richmond, Washington, Baltimore, Brooklyn, Albany, Vernon, Troy, N. Y., Newark, N. J., Bridgeport, Fairhaven, Worcester, Westboro', Athol, Hubbardston, Portland, Thomaston, Bucksport, Bangor, Concord, N. H., Brattleboro', Vt., and to the rural districts of Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Illinois. Some of our book agents have travelled and are travelling all the time, on foot or in wagons, fording the streams of the West or threading the forests of the North, meeting much hospitality and much hardship. These gentlemen conduct religious services as opportunity permits, reason and exhort at the fireside, and are a most unostenta-

tious but efficient missionary corps. One of them, a graduate of the Meadville School, giving himself wholly to the work, and having peculiar adaptedness to it, an earnest love to the cause, an iron frame, and a persuasive manner, receives two hundred dollars per annum from the Association in books.

No effort in which we could engage is so much needed, none so certain to yield an ample return at last; but it requires patience sometimes to wait on in a market already supplied; some agents will prove incompetent for a business which they had never undertaken before; some may be unable, from actual poverty, to return more than a part of the money received; where the books are sold slowly, and with severe painstaking, some pecuniary compensation is expected and must be made. But we cannot imagine less expensive preachers than these volumes even then; nor so permanent a tract distribution; nor more effectual preparation for the future of our country and our faith.

We have now a still more effective instrument placed in our hands, — the Memoir of Dr. Channing, at one third of its original price, to be sold out of New England, New York city, and Philadelphia. It is confidently believed that this Life speaks more impressively to the public heart even than Dr. Channing's Works, — that many will be allured by the eloquent narrative who turn from a volume of sermons in disgust, — that numbers whom no argument will move will yield to the tide flowing from an earnest heart. It is believed, too, that, through our agents and correspondents, we may dispose of one thousand copies in six months, at no serious expense to ourselves; and that this enterprise is in the true spirit of missions, because it goes out of our own limits, beyond, for the most part, our congregations and

ministers, into regions where all books are rare, religious books the rarest, and *our* religious books almost unknown. In the course of another month, these volumes will be for sale at our depository to agents at the South and West.

The department of Missions has been unusually active this year. Twenty missionaries have been employed a part of the time, and twenty-seven places aided, and half the Sundays of the Secretary given to this service, especially during the winter months: when, by order of the Committee, he visited all our Western societies, passed through fifteen States, availed himself of every opportunity to make addresses, travelled nearly five thousand miles, and was greatly instructed and cheered by his journey. We have this year, too, repeated the offence sometimes charged against our Association, of building churches, and have assisted and encouraged five such efforts. But really, we must in some cases do this or do nothing. The hazard is so considerable, the investment so large and so difficult to be removed, that it should be our strange task. Yet are there several points which desire and deserve Unitarian preaching, but cannot have it, because not even a tolerable hall can be borrowed, or hired, or bought, or built by young men already staggering under their pecuniary burdens. And, could a school-house be found sufficiently large, eligibly situated, and unencumbered by school-desks, the hallowing associations of a church could not be felt in it; — that promise of permanency which a building gives would not encourage families to leave other places of worship for this, devout feeling must often be wounded by the mingling of some puppet-show with the altar of prayer, and the effort of sustaining the devotional spirit to those unaccustomed to worship would be doubly difficult in the midst of such memories.

For want of this important help, Wheeling (Va.) may relinquish our services after a time, San Francisco could not commence them, Ellsworth and Bath in Maine, Winchendon in Massachusetts, and Norwich in Connecticut, remain destitute of our ministry, and will so remain until neat chapels can arise to unite the devotions of fellow-believers and lift their hearts heavenward.

The Polanen Chapel at Bridgeport deserves special notice, because so widely different from any former effort. The widow of Hon. R. G. Van Polanen desired to erect a modest house of worship in the city of her residence, the resting-place of her husband's remains, but required for her own support the interest of the money she would have to invest. She was willing to give the building to the Association, to appropriate the proceeds of its sale to missions, if ever Unitarian worship should cease to be sustained there; and engaged that, whatever the expense might be, we should not pay interest upon more than four thousand dollars. Another friend made a donation of sufficient land, and the tasteful edifice was dedicated last October, and has been opened for worship every Sunday since, under better circumstances than could have been hoped, and with good prospect of permanence. The audiences at evening service have been especially encouraging, and have contained representatives of all sects. With our assistance, also, a neat and commodious house of worship has just been erected and dedicated by the young society, under the ministry of Rev. H. F. Harrington, at Lawrence, Mass.

Feltville, near the city of New York, has this year enjoyed our services in its only house of worship, the minister being the teacher of the young on week-days, as of young and old on the day of rest, and there is a fair prospect of a permanent, regular society there.

During the last summer, Rev. E. P. Bond received ordination in this city as our missionary to California; but the imperfect state of his health on reaching that coast, and the impossibility of obtaining even a tolerable place for worship, induced him to repair to the Sandwich Islands, where he was kindly received by the missionaries, has found his health benefited, though not restored, and is ministering acceptably to the English and American residents at that important position, the moral lighthouse, as it has been termed, on the ocean-way of the world!

At the extreme South, in connection with the acceptable labors of Mr. Penniman, a generous friend of our cause is erecting a house of worship at Savannah, and there promises to be a well-established, self-sustaining society at this distant point. Rev. S. Larned has renewed our services at Mobile, and notwithstanding the loss of our church in that city, our friends seem of good courage for the future.

At the North, the Toronto society has been disappointed again of their minister, who was detained on his way to them at the vacant society in Rochester, N. Y.; so that the Canadian seat of government is still obliged to content itself, as far as we are concerned, with a lay service. It seems important that some one should go to the aid of this isolated band, so remarkably faithful under unusual trials. The Secretary has assisted them with such books as could be spared for a Sunday school, and they are ready to welcome cordially and sustain zealously a minister of our faith. At Montreal, our New York paper, the Inquirer, was excluded from the principal reading-room of the city, where the generosity of a friend had placed it among other religious journals, and the members sustained the action of the Directors, but have since retraced their course. The occa-

sion was seized to denounce our opinions and stimulate the prejudices of the community, but the only effect has been to arouse our brethren to greater activity, and fill our church on Sunday evenings with an inquiring and earnest audience.

At the East, a promising opening has been made at Bucksport, and another denomination has joined hands with us in supporting worship. Having an excellent town-hall in which to meet, the vicinity of Bangor to cheer them, with suitable effort on their part, and a well-adapted pastor, a large congregation can no doubt be gathered. The society at Topsham, Maine, is about to change its place and house of worship, so as to occupy a close neighbourhood to the college at Brunswick, and lend its aid to the influences working for the good of an excellent institution.

In Westboro', in this State, the society which had been apparently extinct for several years has recently erected a pleasant and central meeting-house, and a respectable congregation was gathered without difficulty, and has been increasing ever since. Several other openings are reported in different parts of New England; but, while persons could not be found suitable to conduct the new societies already in progress, it seemed worse than idle to form any more.

We have been invited this year to unite with the British and Foreign Unitarian Association in support of their missions in India, where our worship is faithfully maintained by devoted ministers. Otherwise, our correspondence from abroad has not been so important as was desired, but we have been favored with the visits of two gentlemen whose presence in our pulpits and temporary residence among us have afforded sincere pleasure, and whose counsels we hope to receive on this occasion.

The remaining points of interest fall within the winter

journey of the Secretary, and may be mentioned as they occur on the usual lines of Western travel. Syracuse, N. Y., is obliged to enlarge its pleasant chapel to accommodate the steadily increasing numbers; and forty-eight pews are to be added this season. The prosperous society at Buffalo made one of its first offerings to our treasury this year, and has successfully commenced a Ministry at Large, under the charge of Mr. William Cushing. At Cleveland, Elyria, Sandusky City, and other points, Unitarian families were found full of the hope of enjoying in their own midst the services they so much love. Detroit, now a great and growing community, lifted into new prominence by the Michigan Central Railroad, which starts from its river-side, presents the finest possible opening for a large society of Liberal Christians; and there is no other Western point where our worship is so fervently desired, and will be so liberally sustained. Rev. Mr. Tagart, of Albany, is about to occupy this field. The Chicago society, a very important one in every respect, is prospering anew under the ministry of Rev. Rush Shippen. At Geneva and Elgin, Rev. A. H. Conant is encouraged by a slow but steady increase; in one society his regular hearers are already four times their original number. Rockford and Belvidere, like the places just mentioned, share a minister between them, and promise in a few years each to sustain a Liberal preacher for itself. By the aid of two hundred dollars from our treasury, a neat but very small church is now owned and occupied by the Rock-River friends. We regret to know that the parish is made vacant by the illness of Mr. Snow. Milwaukie, having an unpaid-for house, very unfavorably situated, has been obliged to suspend its services for a season, with the purpose of resuming them as soon as an able preacher can be found. Galena, not increasing

much itself, exhibits no striking evidence of increase in the number of our friends; but that distant little band are very steadfast and strongly attached to their pastor, who is the head of the Common School system in that quarter. Still farther north, the new village of Fond du Lac, the southern port of Green Bay, is seeking our ministry, and a hall will be erected this season, suitable for worship, as well as for the intellectual improvement of that rapidly growing place. At Tremont and Peoria, at Davenport, at Ottawa, at Alton, our ministers are desired, and would be partially sustained, with the prospect of increase. At Quincy (Ill.), our society, having suffered much by the pent-up position of its little chapel, has just purchased an excellent lot, and is preparing to occupy it at an expense of twelve hundred dollars. Rev. Mr. De Lange having this spring entered upon more extended service as our General Missionary, this society is now seeking a pastor, with no immediate prospect of being supplied. St. Louis presents one of the most interesting points in all our Western experience. Commenced by a dozen persons in a private parlour, the society has gone from strength to strength, until it maintains two Sunday schools, two pastors, a very wide social influence, and is now obliged to erect a far larger house to accommodate its constantly increasing numbers. Rev. Robert Hassell is associated with Mr. Elliot in his extended labors among the poor, at the prison, in the public school, as well as the church. Cannelton (Ind.), a rapidly growing community, having but one church, and that erected by our Boston friends, is now awaiting a minister from this quarter. The Louisville church is quietly and constantly growing, as much inwardly as outwardly, by that healthy development which is the best proof of faithful effort in the past and the surest promise for the

future. Cincinnati has been deeply afflicted by the sudden death of its pastor, but will now exchange the spirit of heaviness for the garment of praise, under the ministry of a brother whose presence is felt in all our Sunday schools by his excellent Commentary, whose influence was most extensive and salutary through New Hampshire, and whose own health will, we trust, be renewed, while he recruits the enfeebled energies of a struggling society. At Wheeling (Va.), we had assisted during the autumn in forming a union Sunday school by the present of such books as could be spared; on reaching the place as he returned homeward, the Secretary found an earnest discussion of the Trinity occupying public attention every Sunday afternoon, in the little meeting-house where the Sunday school was held. After assisting at this debate and conducting worship with good audiences, he received an unexpected application to continue Unitarian services there, and Rev. Dr. Burnap spent a month with them at our request. Mr. De Lange followed him, as the commencement of his missionary labor in that and the neighbouring towns, Steubenville, Lewisburg, Marietta, etc.; in connection with whose appointment as Travelling Missionary we are led to notice the chief drawback upon our past efforts.

Our principal failure has been, that we have not always been able to send the strongest ministers into the West. It has been our misfortune from the beginning to do much of our hardest work by men fresh from the theological cloister, unacquainted with the world, and inexperienced in the ministry. The Association has been grateful for any aid it could obtain, where the harvest was so large and laborers so few, the compensation so inadequate, and the duties multiplied and responsible. But, born as our preachers

have generally been in this corner of the country, it should not surprise us that they have preferred a confined home-field to a wider influence abroad, — a congenial society to strange associations, supposed destitution of privileges, a calumniated climate, untold and unknown hardship. Yet, as we unroll the blotted pages of the past, as we inquire why, with so much truth, wealth, power, we have done so little, it is easy to see how unenterprising, unadapted, unwise, unsystematized, our efforts have been, — how the children of this world have been wiser than the children of light, — how more experience or courage, more perseverance or hopefulness, would have changed the result.

Our clamorous want now is Western laborers; men of nerve, will, common sense, self-devotion, prayer. Eloquence is not required, nor rare genius; but there must be life to create life. Imbecility is nowhere else so soon detected in the pulpit, nor selfishness so thoroughly scorned in the apostle of self-sacrifice. The impression that "any body will do" in those energetic, improving, quickened Western towns is miserable folly; the leading men in our distant societies are quite as intelligent as similar characters here; a congregation in Wisconsin or Iowa, while it respects good sense, honors independence, and loves a generous soul, will not put up with such men as Eastern societies would not accept. It is to our shame and condemnation, that, when year after year the destitution of so many distant places is made known, and class after class comes forth from our theological schools, and some preachers remain most of the time unoccupied in this neighbourhood, and loud profession is annually made of our interest in the West, our young men pray to be excused on the ground of inexperience, our middle-aged men because of domestic ties, our old men from

physical inability, — and the purpose of Providence in keeping that magnificent country hidden under a veil until two centuries had ripened our Atlantic churches into efficiency, is thwarted by our indolence, selfishness, cowardice, and faithlessness. If any community could go on safely destitute of spiritual guides, it should be *this*, where all hallowed influences are richly garnered up, where the very dust is instinct with holy memories, where our work-day walks, our places of business, and our scenes of pleasure, remind us of the sainted dead. And if any spot on earth needs the utmost combined energy of all Christian philanthropists and patriots, it is that vast garden of our land where countless multitudes seek a new home upon a virgin soil, unfettered by tradition, sanctified by the presence of no past, welcomed by no established religious, intellectual, social, charitable institutions, restrained by no overwhelming public sentiment, no settled moral tone, but exposed to sensual influences, absorbed in care of the body, tempted to animal indulgence as the only pleasure, beset by infidel suggestions on the one hand and Romish institutions on the other, and yet decreed by inevitable destiny to determine our future as a nation, to direct in one generation more the legislation of the country, and make of this goodly temple of liberty, this genial home of humanity, this favored altar of our faith, whatever the missionary philanthropy of our day determines it must be. God grant that we may be faithful to our opportunity and our duty, to ourselves, our country, our Saviour, and our God!

The Executive Committee have endeavoured to bring within the narrowest possible limits such a review of the history of the Association, from its formation to the present

hour, as might remind its friends of the changes through which it has passed, and the services it has rendered in the diffusion of Christian truth and righteousness. They might here close their Report. But they are so strongly impressed with the thoughts which arise on any notice of the last quarter of a century, that they cannot refrain from drawing attention to the memorable character of this period. No similar space of time in the annals of civilization is marked by clearer signs of intellectual activity and social progress. The discoveries that have been made in science and the arts fill us with astonishment at the extent to which human knowledge has been carried, while they inspire gratitude to the Being who has provided for man so many means of comfort. Political science has been greatly advanced, and changes in the internal relations of states, some of which have been as brief as they were sudden, have enkindled new hopes in hearts that yearn for the universal establishment of the liberties and rights of man. The religious, as well as the political, condition of Europe has been full of promise; the spiritual despotism which the Romish Church has for centuries exercised has received a shock little less severe than that which it suffered at the hands of Luther and his contemporaries; while the intelligence of the age, the spread of education, and the diffusion of a philanthropic spirit, are softening the offensiveness of sectarian doctrines, and breaking down the dominion of hierarchies and creeds. In our own country has been witnessed an immense development of the material energies that belong to our state of society, while the growth of the republic, involving us in the disgrace of an ambitious, greedy, and unchristian policy, has not only enlarged the responsibilities and multiplied the resources of the people,

but has brought into prominence questions of political and moral interest inferior in importance to none that have arisen since the days of the Revolution. The land does not wear the same religious aspect which it wore at the commencement of this generation. There is more freedom, if not more variety of opinion, more practical discussion and less theological controversy, and an obvious approach to that mutual respect which should exist between members of different religious communions. Two changes are especially worthy of notice. The interest in sacred criticism has decreased, and the exegetical study of the Bible, which thirty years ago was pursued with an ardor that promised valuable results, has fallen into unmerited neglect. The position of the ministry has become affected by the instability of their professional tenure, and the influence as well as the comfort of the clergy has been seriously impaired. Nor has the reaction which we believe must take place in regard to both these subjects yet begun.

The progress of our own denomination in numbers, influence, religious activity, and the cultivation of a devotional spirit, has not equalled the hopes of many among us, whose expectations, perhaps, outran the foresight of a sober judgment. Yet, when we consider the peculiarity of our position, the hostility of all the principal sects which we at once drew upon ourselves, the atmosphere of intense worldliness in which all religious action has been compelled to hold its inconstant life, and the tenacity, as honorable in its purpose as sometimes disastrous in its effects, with which we have clung to our central principle of individual responsibleness, with the rights of thought and speech which it guarantees to every man, we have less reason than might at first appear for self-reproach, and none for discourage-

ment. If our congregations are not very much more numerous than they were twenty years ago, the influence of the opinions we have advocated is perceptible throughout the land. Upon points of faith our statements have been slightly modified; and the diversity of views among us, while it embarrasses or delays concerted action, is a noble testimony to our respect for conscientious difference of opinion.

In a review of the twenty-five years that have elapsed since the origin of this institution, we notice with special gratitude two grounds of congratulation, — in the quality and amount of religious writings which have issued from our body, and in the character of the men who have left behind them names that we honor and cherish. Of these claims to the respectful and cordial regard of others, we may speak without the imputation of vanity. No religious connection of the same extent has, in its periodical literature or its occasional pamphlets, shown more vigor of thought or industry of the pen, while the larger works that have been given to the public proclaim the scholarship and the integrity of our writers. We need not name the volumes of sermons, the biographical sketches, the ethical works, the contributions to Christian belles-lettres, or the more elaborate productions of the study, enforcing the claims of the Scriptures, or throwing light on their character and meaning, which have come from our authors. We point to their number and excellence with a satisfaction which we need not attempt to conceal.

Of the men who have gone from us it is difficult to speak without tears of grateful emotion. Worthy and noble have they been, each in his sphere, and with his peculiar gifts and graces of personal character, illustrating the law of the

spirit of life in Christ Jesus. Of the fearless but modest Bancroft, the first President of this Association, of the apostolic Worcester, the judicious Porter, the learned Harris, the venerable Ripley, the courteous and dignified Thayer, the amiable and diligent Abbot, of Kirkland, in whom benignity and wisdom found the happiest union, of Ware, the candid controversialist and venerated instructor, of Parker, the most faithful of pastors, of Greenwood, the cherished preacher and friend, of the younger Ware, the example to his brethren of devoted fidelity to every walk and opportunity of usefulness, of Channing, who wrote his own imperishable memorial in the service he rendered to freedom and religion, of Follen, whose excellence inspired admiration while it won our love, of Tuckerman, whose monument is the Ministry at Large, of the Whitmans, brothers in energy, and the Peabodys, brothers in holiness, of Wells and Withington, whose brief ministries will not soon be forgotten, and of others, not less honored or dear in remembrance, we cannot now speak as our hearts move us. To Lowell, the firm and able defender of a maligned cause, to Parker and Howe, expounders of the law of the land and servants of the law of God, to Haven, whose name is inwoven with the history of our Sunday schools, to Saltonstall, as true in heart as strong in mind, to Smith and Davis, in whom old age wore its fairest aspects, to Patterson and Stone, whose early excellence was ripe for heaven, to the learned and eloquent Story, who once presided over our institution, to the zealous and indefatigable Higginson, to Vaughan, whose life was spent for others, to Goodhue, of an unimpeachable integrity and unstinted liberality, and to how many more, — civilians, merchants, scholars, eminent men, and admirable women, — who have illustrated the char-

acter and placed beyond denial the efficacy of our faith, we can only allude in these few words. Mayhew, and Freeman, and Buckminster, and Parsons, and their contemporaries, who stood up for the truth and free inquiry in the early days of our religious history, we may not even notice in this review of a subsequent period. Followers all of the blessed Saviour, bright patterns of the Christian life! "Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the" sins of distrust and sloth which do "so easily beset us, and let us run with patience," even the patience of hope, "the race that is set before us; looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God," where he will welcome his faithful servants, that they too may share in the joy which the Father hath given him.

ADDRESSES

AT THE

PUBLIC MEETING OF THE AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION, MAY 28, 1850.

[The Executive Committee are indebted to most of the speakers for complying with the request that they would prepare their remarks for the press. In a single instance they have been obliged to avail themselves of a report already given in one of the religious journals.]

AFTER the reading of extracts from the Report was concluded, SAMUEL GREELE, Esq., of Boston, was called upon to address the audience on the subject of "the Association as an instrument of good for the last twenty-five years," and spoke as follows: —

Mr. President and Christian Friends, — Aware that brevity is fitting, if not necessary, on occasions like the present, where many are to speak as well as myself, I assure you, in advance, that though my remarks may be lean, they shall not be long. We have been reminded by the Secretary, that this is the Twenty-fifth Anniversary of the American Unitarian Association. A quarter of a century has elapsed since it was formed. We have survived the perils of infancy and of nonage, passed our majority, and fully arrived (speaking after the manner of human life) at manhood's best age. Manly efforts and deeds are justly expected from manly age. The existence of our society, brief as it is, is divided into three

distinct eras or epochs: the controversial, the philanthropic, and the spiritual.

Our society commenced its existence in conflict and toil. And here let me ask, What state or denomination, worthy of a place either in sacred or profane history, ever began to exist without conflict and toil? Do you think that our Pilgrim Fathers would have been hardier champions of liberty and the cross, if their venerable brows had been fanned by the gentle zephyrs of June, instead of being breathed upon by wintry tempests and storms? The most efficient sects in Christendom have likewise commenced existence amid contending foes. The oldest of us can recollect the time when Methodism was a term of obloquy and reproach. Wherever its missionaries went, they were met by sturdy opposition, as enemies of order and disturbers of the peace. But all these persecutions and conflicts have given hardihood to the Methodist character, and better fitted its ministers and its members to become efficient pioneers of the cross. We, too, in the early history of our society, had our full share of trials, conflicts, and toils. But, thank Heaven, I trust they have done our denomination much good. In those stormy days our meeting-houses were any thing but chapels of ease, and our pulpit-cushions were far from being downy pillows for a recumbent clergy to lean upon, while they drawled out drowsy sermons to sleepy hearers.

This was the controversial age of our denomination. The fruits of this period are some of the ablest defences of our common Christianity, as well as of our own peculiar views, which can be found in any denomination. They are worthy to be placed in the same alcove of our libraries that contains the writings of the Fratres Poloni, who were the earliest champions and defenders of the Unitarian faith. These polemical writings have, by their logic and arguments, obtained for us footing on the *terra firma* of our common Christendom, so that we are now no longer considered as interlopers and tenants at will; but our rights are recognized and respected as owners in fee simple of some portions of Christian territory and soil. I do not mean to claim for our society the

paternity and support of all these writers and their productions; but this I do say, that while the authors of these works have been cheered and encouraged in their arduous labors by the officers of your society, these writings have been widely diffused by funds drawn from its treasury. A distinguished prelate in the Anglican Church, Archbishop Tillotson, many years ago highly extolled the Christian good temper displayed in the early propagators of the Unitarian faith, though he added, as a qualification of his commendation, that it was worthy of a better cause. I think any one conversant with their writings must allow that their successors are entitled to like commendation for their meek and charitable spirit, as well as for their sound arguments and cogent logic. Though the heat of religious controversy has somewhat abated, enough of its spirit remains to remind us that we are still members of the Church militant on earth, rather than members of the Church triumphant in heaven. Our position (except in the outposts of our denomination) is now one of armed neutrality, and not of aggressive hostility. The era of controversy was the prelude to the philanthropic age. Our position in Christendom being defined, those energies which were needed for existence and defence could now be appropriated to such philanthropic efforts as were demanded by the exigencies of the age. Our denomination has not shrunk from its responsibility in these respects. Our hospitals, our peace and temperance societies, will bear honorable testimony to our fidelity and zeal. While other sects have shared in our labors and struggles against the besetting sins and evils of the times, there is one institution which owes its paternity to us.

I now allude to the Ministry at Large, one of the most Christian and Apostolic instrumentalities of the age. Other sects, both at home and abroad, following in our wake, have now their ministries to the poor. Our society adopted this child of Unitarian origin, and became its foster parent, by contributing largely to its support. Under its influence and with its aid, Tuckerman and his colleagues entered the humble dwellings of the deserted and abandoned, as well as the tenements of the virtuous poor, and by the

logic of love compelled them to enter the Christian fold. If our denomination and society had done nothing more than this, they would have been well entitled to the Christian name for one of the best Christian enterprises of this or any age.

The third epoch in our society is the spiritual age. Would to Heaven that I could describe from actual life the realities of this wished-for age. Under a sense of short-comings and deficiencies, it is fitting that our words here should be modest and few. I will only say, that I trust the conference and prayer meetings, which have been adopted by us, are the harbingers of a brighter day. Under the influence of these meetings, it is to be hoped that many have been awakened to a sense of their sins, and have become more prayerful and spiritual in their lives.

In conclusion, let me bespeak your countenance and aid for this society, which was established by the labors and prayers of Channing, Ware, Tuckerman, Greenwood, and other professors of our faith, who are now in heaven. Cultivate this tree of their planting; breathe upon its branches the warm breath of your sympathy, confidence, and love; fertilize its roots with your gold, silver, and copper dust.

If you and our successors will only do this, whoever shall survive to witness its centennial anniversary will then find it putting forth fresh leaves and blossoms, and yielding fruit in its old age, alike to the glory of God and the good of man.

Rev. Samuel Osgood, of New York, was next invited to speak on "the progress of theological opinion and the religious sentiment among us during the period" under notice. His remarks were as follows: —

That the too flattering words in which you have introduced me may not be wholly belied, it is but fair to say that I have stepped in at the eleventh hour to take an abler man's place, and that I must needs speak of this important subject, the progress of theology and the religious sentiment during the period under review, in a very desultory manner.

Twenty-five years! An eventful period to us, indeed, both as individuals and as a denomination. We have had our ups and downs, our encouragements and discouragements, yet by Heaven's kind favor we stand here with abundant cause of gratitude, and not without hope review our course. Twenty-five years ago, those of us who, without any undue assumption of youth, may be styled middle-aged men, were schoolboys of ten or twelve, and beginning to think seriously of theological opinions. Some of us, I can well remember, were full of the Trinitarian controversy, and were hunting the Bible in search of texts to substantiate our views. Then came a period of still more anxious discussion, when we looked beyond the instructions of our teachers, beyond our catechisms and churches, into the very foundations of belief. The times questioned us hardly, and the facts of science and the phenomena of nature in its constant cycle of life and death started doubts. We took quite radical ground, and looked boldly into the face of the ministers, as if to ask them who they were and why they taught. We wished to know why we should respect the Church, and why accept the Scriptures. Thus we had our part in that movement which has been so significant in New England during the last quarter-century, — the investigation of the foundations of faith. We found helpers of all sorts. Some bade us believe because it was a sin to doubt; others rested the claims of Christianity solely upon critical and historical researches; others slighted the historical element, and insisted chiefly on the ethics of the Gospel and its appeal to a moral sentiment in man. They, however, who met our want most wisely taught us to recognize a religious faculty in our souls, to which God appeals both in his works and his word. Here we found great comfort, and were glad to be receivers of the spiritual philosophy so conspicuous in our time. But now a great point was to be decided in the minds of many. We believed in a spiritual faculty, a religious sentiment in man, a light within, that bore witness of God. Was this, however, enough? Some thought that it was enough, or that it needed only such aids as nature and philosophy could give. But some of us went farther. We were

not satisfied with the dreams of Socrates and the guesses of Cicero; we were not willing to regard the Son of God as but a wise and good man, — a new name added to the list of the world's sages. The existence of a religious capacity within our souls moved us to believe that God must have provided for its guidance in some unequivocal manner, and to look with new respect upon the claims of revelation. Our transcendentalism led us to revelation as the transcendent fact, and we reposed in Christ as the Word of God to man. Of those who did not go so far, but who rested in a kind of natural spiritualism, I will not say aught in disparagement. Nay, when I think of their personal excellence and intellectual gifts, I am often tempted to be proud of them, — proud of those among us called most heretical, although they must pardon me for thinking that, like the winds which play truant from the spice-islands, they bear with them in their wandering not a little of the fragrance of the home they have left. Nor will we condemn those who went farther than we did, — the few who found rest or hoped to find it in the arms of Rome or England. We thought that we could trust in Christ without calling any man master.

Exploring the foundations of faith and the nature of the religious sentiment, we were led to views of Christianity more sacred than the old liberalism and more rational than the old orthodoxy. Following the yearnings of our own hearts, and not without aid from select minds in many quarters, we called Christ our Saviour as we had not done before. We could not call him the Supreme God, but through him and within him we found the Father and the way of life. Thus a more satisfying Christology grew up before us, — a doctrine of Christ, ethical and rational indeed, but more than this, devotional, evangelical. More heartily than in any arbitrary form we could seek the mercy-seat in the name of the Son, and join in the hymns of faith and love that have for ages breathed the piety and charity of the Church. Calvinism, — the whole system of scholastic and dogmatic Trinitarianism, — we liked as little as ever; and in its overstrained formulas, it seemed to us to have the worst faults of the dry rationalism that we had re-

jected, and to rest rather upon a theory of man than upon a fact of God. As to Christ's nature, there was much in it that we did not presume to comprehend or define. What Divine manifestation can we define? — nay, who can fully define his own soul or his neighbour's? Who shall define by any exhaustive analysis the whole contents of that being in whom the Father dwelt as with none other? We believed that God was and is in Christ, and had peace and joy in believing.

The Scriptures became more luminous and refreshing. We did not find our regard for them dependent upon the turn of a comma or the erasure of a letter. We found the great principle of Unitarian Christians enough for us, confirmed as it is now by the testimony of scholars of every name, — that the Bible is the record of revelation, that the sacred treasure is in an earthen vessel, full of the marks of the times and persons through whom it came, yet none the less surely holding the waters of life.

As already hinted, the devotions of our churches breathed a new spirit. Our hymn-books — those compiled at the time of the rising opposition to the old orthodoxy — seemed negative and cold, — at best a transcript of the Hebrew psalms, — too often recognizing God only as the Lord of nature, and slighting his great and crowning manifestation in Jesus Christ, — slighting the precious promise of the Spirit, the gift of the Comforter. The change in the tone of our devotional poetry is matter of history, and the hymn-books now passing into use are full of Christ, full of the faith and hope that are in him, full of the communion with the Father opened by his life and death and resurrection.

Our church life in general has felt this renewing influence. Preaching, without in the least lowering its philosophical and ethical tone, has urged more earnestly the peculiar points of the Gospel, especially the mediation of Christ. In this we have found much sympathy with the best minds of the Old World and the New, and in men nominally orthodox we find our views of the one God, and of Christ, his Word, abundantly confirmed. We find solace in the thoughts of the best minds of Germany, especially of

the modern Evangelical school, — in Schleiermacher, *not* a pantheist, — in Ullman and others, eloquent and learned in defence of the faith, — in men not a few among the living writers of England, New and Old.

The young people of our parishes have shared in this movement, and ask a more positive ministry of religion than merely critical learning or acute moralizing can give. So far as I have known them, they desire that more should be made of church associations and ordinances. For myself, alike from temperament, conviction, and observation, I am a believer in church action ; — a Unitarian church-man I am willing to be called. With forms of spiritual despotism I have little affinity, but the Gospel in its freedom and charity calls for our union in him who is, under God, our Head, and we find each other's souls as we meet in Christ. New interest attaches to the font of baptism and the table of communion. Our youth, notwithstanding their frequent waywardness, desire to be Christians, and want more than a dogma, more than a theory, to satisfy them. The great thing with us now is to meet the want. The children have not the theological bias which was so prominent with their fathers, and which gave many of our congregations such a stamp of uniformity. They have all the elements that are to be found in Christendom, and can be ministered to only by a religion as broad, as catholic, as the Gospel itself. Here, for example, is a man who many years ago came to one of our societies to get rid of orthodoxy, hating the sound of theology. His son rises up with far different wants, asks to be instructed in the elements of positive Christianity, and by every means of knowledge and persuasion to be saved from constant temptation. Here is another man, interested in one or two reforms, whose eye brightens only when strong drink or war is denounced, and whose ear closes at the mention of faith and communion. But his daughter is wholly of different mould. She craves a religion specific in its devotional requirements, spiritual in its foundations, and asks to be led to Christ with a yearning like that which sent the devout Guyon to consult with Fenelon, or Theresa to sit at the feet of

Francis Borgia. We must meet these and like wants. We must have churches, not lecture-rooms; we must preach a gospel, not assert opinions or parade speculations. The new light of our age we will not disparage; but all science and all action shall be consecrated by faith. No worthy interest of humanity will we slight, but rather show our honor for humanity by our reverence for God, and serve man in serving Christ and his Church. All honor to the faithful pastors who are helping and have helped us in this work. Great thinkers and great truths we need and have had. But the great need is to make familiar truth living and practical. Honored be the name of him whose fame has made this pulpit illustrious, — honored for the works of his gifted pen, more honored for the work of his ministry, when he did a pastor's duty and led his people in the way of life!

John G. Palfrey, LL. D., of Cambridge, was then requested to speak on "the character of those who have been worthy and prominent among us." We can give only a sketch of his remarks, taken from the Christian Inquirer.

Without a syllable of response to the unexpected and flattering terms by which he had been introduced, he would proceed at once to the subject on which he was to speak. At the occurrence of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Association, it had been thought proper to look to him, as one of the few survivors of those in the ministry in this city at or before the time of its establishment, for a few references to the past. He came into the ministry about thirty-two years since. There were then here only ten Congregational churches. The year after his ordination the "Christian Disciple" passed from the charge of Dr. Noah Worcester, and was intrusted to a few associates, as the organ for the communication of their views on questions then agitating the minds of many. Three years had elapsed since the Unitarian controversy began. In 1819, the first Unitarian church in a Southern State, that in Baltimore, was established. This was

also the first out of New England, except those in Philadelphia, Northumberland (Pennsylvania), and Trenton (New Jersey). On the return of the council from the ordination of Mr. Sparks, at Baltimore, Dr. Channing, aided part of the day by the speaker, preached in a hall in the city of New York, and from this service sprang successively the two churches in that commercial metropolis, and the one in the neighbouring city of Brooklyn. At the period of which he now spoke, memory called up, as among the elders, Dr. Ripley of Concord; Dr. Prince of Salem, who rarely appeared at the annual meetings; Dr. Osgood of Medford, a moderate Calvinist, but a liberal-minded man; Dr. Bancroft of Worcester; Dr. Thayer of Lancaster; Dr. Allyne of Duxbury; Dr. Abbot of Beverly; Dr. Porter of Roxbury; Dr. Harris of Dorchester. Seemingly as old as these, because alike in youth, middle life, and age he wore his white locks, — the hoary head, which in his case was always in the way of righteousness, — he might allude to our venerable friend of Brookline, who has so recently departed. Dr. Freeman, of King's Chapel, did not strictly belong to us; yet he was most liberal and catholic. It has been said of him, that he was the first of the Unitarians in New England. All honor to him for the very many things for which honor is most richly his due. Yet *this* statement is not correct. Unitarianism here did not first spring up in the Episcopal Church. A forest of its roots already existed in the inclosure of Congregationalism. No! not in the inclosure; he would take that back, — but in the keep, the park, the unimpaled common of Congregationalism. Congregationalism has no *inclosure*. Then there were Dr. Parker of Portsmouth, New Hampshire; Mr. Foster of Charleston, South Carolina, known personally to few at the North; Bailey of Greenfield; Damon of Lunenburg; Abbott of Salem; his successor, Dr. Brazer; Dr. Greenwood, and Dr. Follen. These were his seniors, with the exception, perhaps, of the last. Of his juniors were the two Peabodys; the two Whitmans; and, younger yet, Wells of Kennebunk and Groton; Withington of Leominster. There were others who

sustained other relations to the public, such as Kirkland; the two Wares; Dr. Tuckerman; Dr. Worcester, the apostle of peace. The speaker thus gathered together a cluster of saints; and those who heard will never forget how, as he passed along the bright list, now by a single epithet, full of meaning, now by allusion to some holy and special service, and now by a brief description, he recalled each of the translated band, in his own peculiar beauty and individuality of genius, learning, eloquence, philanthropy, and Christian worthiness.

One more name, said Dr. P., might be uttered. But these walls were vocal with the voice of him, who from this pulpit preached to the circumference of the world. In Christian history where is there one who has done more to put Christianity as the central principle into all the doings of men, than Channing? He omitted many names, — he had mentioned many, but he omitted many. The shadows came so numerous, that his vision grew dim. He looked around and felt like one

"Who treads alone some banquet-hall deserted," —

a banquet-hall for all that is noblest, purest, best in the soul. But no, *not deserted*. Others have come up to put on the helmet of salvation, and the breastplate of righteousness, — to take the shield of faith, and the sword of the spirit, — to be clothed with the whole armour of God, and carry forward the work. May God bless them! May the God of the fathers be the God of the children! May they join the new illumination of the present to the light of the past, and add glory to the cause of truth and peace, holiness, liberty, and love.

Rev. Henry W. Bellows, of New York, in response to a call from the chair to notice "the contributions we have made to religious literature, and the influence we have exerted upon public opinion," spoke as follows: —

Mr. President, — I shall need your praise and your indorsement, for I have come prematurely from the chamber of invalid-

ism to be present at this meeting, and I address you without fitting preparation. It does not add to my confidence to find myself standing on the same platform with him who has just spoken, at whose feet I long sat, if not a diligent, at least a docile and grateful pupil. I know not whether we should feel more exalted in viewing ourselves as the children of such fathers as he has described, or depressed under a sense of the obligations resting on the sons of such sires. Nay, we may well feel solicitous lest their places should never be filled in the ministry, when those like himself, most competent to succeed them, leave the pulpit they have adorned for posts which they equally honor, but which rob our profession of their support!

I shall not, Sir, follow the suggestion of the subject named in your order of topics so closely as to review the works which have proceeded from the Unitarian body during the last twenty-five years. That is unnecessary. In drawing the portraits of the men who have gone from us, with the pencil of Stuart, your last speaker, Sir, has made their works rise with their names, and we have felt that the men and their writings have passed at once under our review. I must content myself with a few very general remarks upon the literature of liberal Christianity in its connection with the position and prospects of our denomination and the situation of the ministry.

And the first difficulty, in speaking of the literature of liberal Christianity, is found in naming any popular literature of our time which does not belong to that school. The chief obstacle to the denominational progress of Unitarianism is the spread of those liberal sentiments to which it owed its own birth, but which have advanced more rapidly than it could. As a body, we are but one among many effects of the general emancipation of the human mind from bondage, — and the love of intellectual and moral liberty is now ministered to so effectually by other and more general means, that free inquirers and liberal thinkers in religion are not driven to our churches and pulpits for the relief of their consciences or the supply of their wants. It is surprising to notice

how the control of the most influential reviews and newspapers has passed into the hands of liberal thinkers in religion. It would be easy to specify them, and illustrate the statement that the most potent instruments in the formation of public opinion in this country are under the inspiration of the liberal school. But it would be an invidious and impolitic office to hold them up to the suspicion and assault of alarmed religionists. Nor, indeed, is it at all probable that those who communicate the spirit to the periodical literature of the day are themselves aware of their actual position. All earnest minds in our day possessing popular power are under the influence of a spirit far greater and wiser than their own, — borne on a tide which is directed by a mightier hand than theirs, — and the liberality of the current thought of the world is an evidence that God is opening the understanding of the race. While we were greatly in advance of the times, our denominational office seemed a vastly important one, and we dreamed of a rapid and an increasing spread as a sect. But our cause has prospered too much for our prosperity as a denomination. We have lost importance in the triumph of our own principles. True, our efforts have not been without a specific and great effect; nor will they cease to be necessary and influential. Our specific contribution to the liberalizing of public sentiment in general has been large, — it will remain of consequence in the future. We shall continue to form an important department in the Christian Church, and must always have a high and sacred office; but as the sole representatives of free thought in religion, the only refuge of thinking minds, the chief bulwark of religious liberty, — the time has gone by when we could claim any such office. And it is alike an honor to our cause and a proof of the arduousness of our future labors, that it is so.

The spread of a liberal literature has not only diminished the exclusive importance of our denomination, but it has affected the authority of the pulpit in general, and changed somewhat the ground of the preacher's office; and no other body is so sensitive to this change as our own. The clergy are not the only thinkers in

religion now-a-days. Christianity is not shut up in the church. Instruction is not doled out solely from the pulpit. The world has become a reading world. It has grown out of the control of any one class, clerical or otherwise. It is manifest that the clergy are losing official importance. The profession steadily diminishes in attractiveness. Dr. Wayland has shown us that we cannot cheapen theological education enough to make it popular; that we cannot give it away; nay, that such a bribe as a thousand dollars — nay, sixteen hundred dollars, — said to be the actual sum received in privileges over and above his private expenditures by every graduate of the Theological School at Cambridge — is not sufficient to win our young men of promise into ministerial studies. The Report, too, has spoken of the great difficulty of obtaining ministers for the West. It is not our difficulty alone, — all sects are experiencing it. It is manifest that the heart of the world is not just now in our calling. We are depressed, suspected; our usefulness and importance questioned. Well, Sir, let it be so! I would not lure one single man into the sacred profession. Let it fall away! Let it lose caste and influence! Let the world diminish its importance as much as it can! It wants no petting, asks no forbearance. It has received far more harm than profit by such tenderness. No! Let the profession come into fair issue with the world. If the clerical office can be dispensed with, — if it is not important, — if it cannot vindicate its place in society, — let it perish! If the world can do without it, any better than it can do without the world, it ought to decay. But I have no fears of any such result. It is my firm conviction, that the great office of stated instruction in religion is founded in the nature of man and in the providence of God. But this is not true of many of the circumstances that have characterized the ministerial profession. And it is the decay of these, and not of the office, which is now showing itself. The world, the Gospel, can neither of them bear in this day the notion of two codes of morality, two sets of manners, for the laity and the clergy. The ministry will derive less and less support from prescription, from sanctimonious-

ness of looks, and peculiarities of costume, and asceticism of behaviour. But it will have more and more authority and influence, as the real nature and difficulty of the Christian life, the real height and depth of a true piety, are better understood. The application of the simplest principles of Christianity to the actual business and duties of men in this age demands a courage, simplicity, and faith, which will thoroughly vindicate the importance of those who display them. We have not fallen upon smooth times; the ministry is not henceforth to preach in chapels of ease. It is a part of the popular philosophy, I know, that the future is only bright. Many seem to think we have at length got the world from its old jolting road on to a railway, and that it is now necessarily to go forward with ever-accelerating speed and security to a destination of unspeakable blessedness. But I cannot join with these prophets of smooth things. There are enough elements of anxiety and difficulty in the prospect. The awful problem of Socialism, so terrible a question in France, is sure to present itself sooner or later for our solution. Nay, it has already found a voice on this side of the water. And the coming generation will have to meet it. The heavy cloud of domestic slavery hangs portentously in our horizon, with very little light in its folds, — and we shall have to meet that. With such questions added to the constant sum of difficulty, the moral and religious teachers in this country never more needed to be brave and practical and business-like men, who feel that their calling rests upon the broad basis of utility and reality, and who are ready to vindicate their own importance by the common principles of social valuation.

But, Sir, I must not continue this unpremeditated strain. I see you looking at your watch, and am reminded of the narrow limits of our time. I conclude with hoping that, so far as our own body is responsible, the liberal literature and free thought of the age may be controlled and directed by the spirit of the Gospel, administered by earnest and faithful men.

Rev. Russell Lant Carpenter, of England, being next introduced to the audience, spoke on "Unitarianism abroad for the last twenty-five years," in substance as follows: —

Sir, — The black cloud to which the last speaker has alluded has saddened us, even on the other side of the Atlantic. When we contrasted that freedom and prosperity, which might naturally excite your pride, with that baneful and humiliating institution, we were reminded of the providence of God, who permitted the Apostle a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan, to buffet him, lest he should be exalted above measure. To many of my brethren, that cloud seemed to shed so much of its darkness even here, that they feared to come among you; but whilst not insensible of the evil, it has been my privilege to behold the rainbow of promise, and to know that there was light which would dissipate the gloom. My father's love for America made me well acquainted with many who are honored here. When I heard this evening the names of the sainted dead, I recognized several as familiar household words among us. When I looked on him who uttered them, and on you, Sir, and on others here, I remembered that I had seen you first under our own roof. Nor are we strangers to you. I have visited many of your societies in the Slave States and in the Free, and have found there the products of my father's mind. The great principles which we hold in common on each side the ocean are mitigating the evils in the world, and preparing for their gradual extinction. I have visited the churches which were first established on a Unitarian basis, and have been reminded that our opinions were first promulgated here by Englishmen.

We have been told that the British and Foreign Unitarian Association dates back, as this does, a quarter of a century; but in Exeter, eight years ago, I attended the fiftieth anniversary of the Western Unitarian Society. Sir, in the founders of that society a courage was required which we are not called on to display. Before the year 1813, any persons convicted of Unitarianism were disabled from enjoying any office; and, after the second conviction,

were outlawed, and liable to three years' imprisonment. But when the law of man and the law of God seemed at variance, our fathers hesitated not which to obey. It was, indeed, the boast of our jurists, that Christianity was part and parcel of the law of England; and it was in the Toleration Act of the champion of freedom, William III., that these persecuting clauses were enacted. But the Unitarians held not such a notion either of toleration or of Christianity. The part must be less than the whole. The Christianity which is part of the law of a land must be subordinate to that law. Their aim was to make the law of England part and parcel of Christianity; and till it should be so, they fearlessly, though lawlessly, held by Christianity. In 1813, a Unitarian could obey the law and his conscience at the same time.

Perhaps there was never more zeal manifested among the English Unitarians than about 1825, when this Association was first established. Their doctrines were advocated, not only by converts from orthodoxy, such as were their earlier champions, but by men whose religion had been nurtured under Unitarian influences. As allusion has been made to my father, I may say that he was one of the first English Unitarian writers, who was not only a Unitarian, but the son of a Unitarian. The meeting-house in Kidderminster, in which he worshipped as a child, and where my friend, Mr. Mountford, worshipped after him, was one of the earliest which was erected for the maintenance of liberal opinions. He may, therefore, be taken as an example of what Unitarianism can do for man's heart and soul, whilst he was free from that asperity against which a convert finds it needful to strive. It was just about a quarter of a century ago that he officiated at the opening of the York Street Chapel, — the first for the promulgation of Unitarianism in the West End of London. Since that time our history has been an eventful one. In 1828, the Test and Corporation Acts, by which the Dissenters were excluded from most civil offices, were repealed; but, as if there must be always persecution somewhere, no sooner were Dissenters freed from these grievances, than they began to persecute each other. The Uni-

tarians were descendants of a body which always possessed political influence. We have never been without some member of the aristocracy, and have had more of our number in the House of Commons than all the other Dissenters put together. Other sects have used both their hands to build up their church; — we have kept one hand free to improve the world. The result might be anticipated. Our sect is small, — our worldly influence comparatively great. As long as there was a heavy pressure on Dissenters, the Orthodox denominations were glad of the talent and energy which they found among us. When that pressure was removed, there were some who thought that they might safely cast us off and injure us. The law, which was so bad that it had been a dead letter long before it had been swept away, was virtually revived by the professors of freedom. They obtained the decision of the lawyers, that, since no one can legally do an illegal act, no one could make a Unitarian endowment before 1813; and that no endowment made before that date could be administered by Unitarians. Declaimers for tolerance wrested from us Lady Hewley's fund, worth about £3,000 a year, — though the trustees, with a liberality characteristic of our body, had distributed two thirds of it among the Orthodox. They quarrelled among themselves, however, as regards the division of the spoil. They were proceeding to attack our other property, when government, who saw more evil than these religionists did in angry and ceaseless litigation, introduced and carried, about five years ago, the Dissenters' Chapels Bill, by which Unitarian endowments previous to 1813 were legalized, and by which that period of twenty-five years which we are now celebrating was made of importance; for it was enacted that, in case the trust-deed should specify no doctrine, the undisputed profession of any doctrine for the space of twenty-five years should be sufficient security from attack. This Act marks an epoch in our denominational history. It enables us to live in peace with our fellow-Dissenters. It has removed one cause for despondency, and improvements have been made in the old edifices, and new and handsome structures have been raised on old foundations,

now that we know that they will not become the spoil of the aggressor. It gave publicity, through the discussions in Parliament, to the great principles which are the basis of our societies; and it recalled our own attention to those principles. We were reminded that most of our places of worship were not erected for the promulgation of Unitarianism, but, in connection with the nurture of the spiritual life, for the maintenance of the great right of private judgment, which, when freely exercised, so frequently results in Unitarianism. Unitarian opinions, during the last two centuries, had visited different denominations; but they found no home. At one time they prevailed far more in the Church of England than among the Presbyterians, but they could not live where creeds forbade their truthful utterance. They found a fit abiding-place among our English Presbyterian ancestors, who had learnt, in persecution, to hold the duty of free inquiry and the sufficiency of Scripture.

If you ask me, Sir, as to the present condition of our body, I own that I do not consider that question of the first importance. Our body may or may not have flourished more than it does now, but those fundamental principles for which alone it is worth while for our body to live have never been more widely diffused than at present. In numbers, the avowed Unitarians are few, but they are influential. Our army, like Gideon's, is small, but it may prevail, for it is composed of "picked men." Half a dozen men of independent minds are stronger than a thousand of no minds at all. Do I mean that men of other sects have no minds? Far from me be such an imputation! But many seem to have no mind in religious matters. They take Calvin's mind, or Wesley's mind, and give up their own.

Sir, this land is sacred, to a Unitarian. It contains the dust of two men who have done more than any others in these days to diffuse and illustrate our opinions. I have visited the spot where Channing died: I have also made a pilgrimage to the last resting-place of Priestley. You have been told that the notice here taken of our doctrinal writings in England first enlisted the pen of Dr. Channing. Differ as some may from the old English Unitarians, with

their Necessitarianism and Materialism, you are still the better for their light. The Argand lamp may be ignited by the dimmer flame, and Priestley would rejoice if a brand from his fire should have helped to kindle the purer, brighter lustre of a Channing.

When I think of that patriot, so tenderly attached to his own land, compelled, on account of his opinions, to fly in his old age to this distant region, I am reminded that *Unitarian* is a word endeared by its conflicts with obloquy, reproach, and persecution. Let us give a negative description of our position, and say that we are Protestants, Dissenters, Non-subscribers, Non-conformists. We English are said to love a good, downright, manly No! But the more we think of it, the more we may value the positive appellation, — Unitarian. We are Unitarians as regards men. We would not blend them in a common mass, but treat them as individuals. In one important sense each man must stand alone, — bear his own burden, work out his own salvation. We are Unitarians as regards Christ. We talk not of his two natures. It is not God-man who came to save us; but "there is one mediator between God and man, the *man* Christ Jesus." We are Unitarians as regards God. Like the Jews, we say that He is One, with a unity to which there is no comparison. He alone exists unmodified by other beings or external influences. But how can a creature speak of a unity undefinable, incomprehensible? We are Unitarians as regards the union of these beings with each other. The units are to be united in a free harmony. The perfection of each separate being is to make the concord more complete. Each man is *one*. All men are to be *at one*. Christ is one; but we are all to be one with Christ. God is one; but those who love dwell in God, and God in them. Hear the prayer of Jesus for all his disciples; — "that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that they may be *made perfect in* ONE."

Rev. EDWARD E. HALE, of Worcester, was, in conclu-

sion, desired to speak on "the present as a starting-point for the future in regard to religious thought and action."

Mr. Hale said, that, at that hour of the evening, it would, perhaps, be wisest to let the future speak for itself. But if he were to go on, it must be understood to be precisely because he had no history. He and his friends, for whom he was called to speak, listened, with a feeling which their elder brethren could hardly understand, to the tale of the last thirty years, precisely because they were not actors in that history.

As we listen, Sir, to that tale of what, in contrast to what our English brethren have to tell us of, I must call our somewhat gentle persecutions, our tender martyrdoms, our crowns of rosy thorns, if thorns they were at all, — we listen as you remember to have listened to the tales of men older themselves, who repeated to you in your younger lives their personal experiences in the old political trials of the Revolution, — in the times which really tried men's souls. We listen, I mean, as to a piece of past history, which, except upon the record, is done with. We came to our work as to something established, permanent, and fixed. We found it a reality before us. The harvest-field stretched out plain to our eyes, and our sickles were sharpened to our hands; so that now, as we look back upon our little efforts, we look back with no martyr in our number of whom to boast. We cannot pretend that in that labor we have any cross to bear, as in the way which has been described, — the way of these the honored fathers of our faith. We have attempted to follow them, *haud passibus æquis*, with our younger zeal.

And what is this definite position which we find offered to the Liberal Christianity of to-day, as the harvest-field of its garnering? Why, it seems so distinctly laid out by Providence that a child could not misunderstand. We find ourselves standing in a *present* of the greatest activity. Because of the greatest activity it is an age of the greatest aspiration. That is to say, this day is in all its material development, in all its intellectual resources, the most

amazing, the most extraordinary, that God's eye has ever looked upon. We have regarded this fact as an intimation, clear to every heart, that such machinery of action needed a greater measure of *life* beneath it than God's will had ever demanded. And we believe that God supplies the tools for his laborers. We hold that God has given us this press which has been spoken of, this literature which we hear extolled, and this pulpit of to-day, as influences sufficient, as influences intended, to save this active world, this intellectual world, by giving it just this element which its activity requires, — giving it "life more abundantly." The tools of the world's action are such as they never were before. The poetry of David receives its literal accomplishment to-day. The omnipresence of God in the world is illustrated even to the eye, by one of his most amazing agencies of to-day. In the new means by which he permits man to communicate with man, and announces his providential purposes and dealings in an instant from city to city, destroying time, annihilating space, he gives us in material symbol an exhibition of that providence in which, though there be no speech, yet his voice is heard. "His line is" literally "gone out into all time," and in an instant "his word to the end of the world." The word spoken at the centre of this empire to-day will to-night penetrate into its most distant corners. And is there a child weak enough to suppose that this *larger* world could be satisfied with the same measure of faith and life which satisfied the *little* world of two or three centuries ago? We must answer, *no such thing:* and we hold it to be a special duty of ours, to seek to use the new machinery in giving the measure of the Divine life to every man.

And what is this process of enlarging the life of the time? It is no longer — that is its peculiarity — to address itself, as of old, to masses of men. The new activity of the world calls out a million of actors and workers, where a century ago there was only one. And, if again I may speak for a host of my contemporaries, — different all of us from each other in opinion and in system, and yet I trust one in the unity of the spirit, — we suppose that the enlivening of this generation is to go on, *man by man*, different influ-

ences coming upon each separate man. Nor do we dread the immense duty involved in such action. We can see, that, in such a world as I have described, the effect which arouses one man's life may be greater than any of the greatest triumphs of the early days. The influences which were brought to bear upon the life of Wordsworth, — that Bible of his which has been described to us, — or the Christian influence which acts in a life like Lamartine's, — why should I not speak of Charles Dickens, too, that preacher to the antipodes? — a Christian influence acting on any one such man as they, in this day of wider worth, is greater much in its effects, as far as human eye can see, than any one of those efforts of old time, when, among the savages of Britain, St. Austin converted a nation in a day.

Nor have we any fear that, in the variety of operations thus acting upon separate lives, there will be any breach or schism in the great Christian commonwealth of God. We believe in diversities of operations, because we have faith in the power of that same spirit. Through the new agencies of the time, the different members, the different limbs, of Christ's body will and must grow together, — assimilate, not in forms, but in life, and the whole living body grow each day larger and stronger.

And now, in this enlivening duty of the time, we feel that we of the liberal communions have especial advantages and glorious responsibilities. We look with all regard, with all respect, yes, with reverence, upon those men who in our time are quite satisfied with the measure of life given them by the old interpretation of God's word, — the old formulas of faith. Let them stand still, so long as that discipline suffices them, in their well-disciplined and valiant array, compact as ever, and in the old form and order. But we believe that God, in enlarging the size of his world, meant to enlarge the amount of instruction to be gained from his Son and his word. We seek that enlarged instruction. And we do not fear, we do not care, when they tell us that we are only a straggling, raw, undisciplined militia. We thank God that we are. They tell us that we have no leaders to show us the way to Jesus. We

thank God that we have not. We are willing to stand on our open mountain ridges, seeking God's truth for ourselves, though sometimes the air be cold, though sometimes the path be broken. Yet, if we need encouragement, we find it when we look back into the valley, where the sun strikes down hot upon the host, and see the close-knit army of our friends, waiting till the pioneers have opened their farther way for them. Elbow to elbow, line behind line, we see them arrayed there closely in their well-trained battalia: and though, in his moments of earthly ambition, one might be glad to be a leader of such a gallant host, who of us all would willingly be one of those middle men, who cannot stop without being trampled down from behind, — who cannot move forward without the permission of those before? And when they warn us of the dangers of isolation, we have only, amid the cool night-air of our mountain-watches, to look round upon the watchfires of our immense brotherhood of pioneers, flashing up there, and there, and there, on every hill-top within our horizon, — we have only to remember that one spirit lights them all, and to rejoice in that unity of the spirit, which is our only bond of peace. Nor need we be ashamed of the duty which Providence gives us, — that we may, as we stand here, welcome those gallant fellows who stray up to us, dissatisfied with the ensigns, with the enlisting cries, of the close-trained bands below, crying out with tears that they have been to them, and have not been satisfied; that they asked for bread, and were given opinion; that they seek not the way only, not even the truth only, but are praying for more abundant *life*.

ACT OF INCORPORATION.

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS.

In the year one thousand eight hundred and forty-seven.

An Act to incorporate the American Unitarian Association.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives, in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows: — Section 1. Charles Briggs, Samuel K. Lothrop, Henry P. Fairbanks, their associates and successors, are hereby made a corporation, by the name of the American Unitarian Association, with all the powers and privileges, and subject to all the duties, liabilities, and restrictions, set forth in the forty-fourth chapter of the Revised Statutes; and said corporation may hold real and personal estate to the value of fifty thousand dollars, to be devoted exclusively to the promotion of the interests of moral and religious instruction. Section 2. All donations, devises, and bequests of real and personal estate, which may heretofore have been made to the American Unitarian Association, or to the Executive Committee thereof, shall be and enure to the use and benefit of the corporation hereby created, to be appropriated, however, to the purposes designated in any such donation, devise, or bequest. Section 3. This Act shall take effect from and after its passage.

House of Representatives, March 3d, 1847. Passed to be enacted.

EBEN. BRADBURY, *Speaker.*

In Senate, March 4, 1847. Passed to be enacted.

W. B. CALHOUN, *President.*

March 4th, 1847. Approved.

GEO. N. BRIGGS.

Secretary's Office, March 5, 1847.

I certify the foregoing to be a true copy of the original Act.

JOHN G. PALFREY,

Secretary of the Commonwealth.

BY-LAWS.

ARTICLE 1. The object of the American Unitarian Association shall be to diffuse the knowledge and promote the interests of pure

Christianity throughout our country; and all Unitarian Christians in the United States shall be invited to unite and coöperate with it for that purpose.

Art. 2. An annual subscription of one dollar shall constitute a person a member so long as such subscription be paid, and a subscription of thirty dollars shall constitute a person a member for life.

Art. 3. The officers shall be a President, two Vice-Presidents, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and five Directors, two of whom, at least, shall be laymen. These officers shall be chosen by ballot, at the annual meeting, and shall hold their offices for one year, or till others be chosen in their stead.

Art. 4. These officers shall constitute an Executive Committee, who shall meet at least once in each month, and shall have charge of all the business and interests of the Association, the direction of its funds and operations, with power to fill any vacancies that may occur in their number between any two annual meetings, and to call special meetings of the corporation whenever they shall deem it necessary or expedient.

Art. 5. It shall be the duty of the Secretary to keep a full record of the meetings of the corporation, and of the Executive Committee; to conduct the correspondence of the Association, and keep an accurately arranged file of the same; and in general to perform such services, to suggest, devise, and execute, under the direction of the Executive Committee, such plans and measures, as shall, in their judgment, tend to promote the objects of the Association, increase its usefulness, and enlarge the sphere of its influence; and his salary shall be determined by vote of the corporation at the annual meeting.

Art. 6. The annual meeting of the Association shall be held on the Tuesday before the last Wednesday in May, at nine o'clock, A.M., at such place in the city of Boston as the Executive Committee may appoint, of which due notice shall be given by advertisement in two or more newspapers published in Boston, at least ten days previous.

Art. 7. Any amendment of these articles, proposed at one annual meeting, may be adopted at the next, if a majority of the members present vote in favor of it.

CLERGYMEN MEMBERS FOR LIFE.

The following clergymen have been made members for life of the Association, by the donation of thirty dollars or more, principally from ladies of their respective societies.

Abbot, Abiel, D D.
Adams, Edwin G.
Alden, Seth
Alger, Horatio
Alger, William R.
Allen, Joseph, D. D.
Allen, Joseph H.
Allen, T. Prentiss
* Andrews, William
Arnold, Augustus C. L.
Babbidge, Charles
* Bancroft, Aaron, D. D.
Barrett, Samuel, D. D.
Barry, William
* Bartlett, John
* Bascom, Ezekiel L.
Bates, Reuben
Bellows, Henry W.
Bigelow, Andrew, D. D.
Billings, Liberty
* Brazer, John, D. D.
Briggs, Charles
Brigham, Charles H.
Brooks, Charles
Brooks, Charles T.
Brown, Addison
Brown, J. F.
Buckingham, Edgar
Buckingham, J. A.
Burnap, George W.
Burton, Warren
Bush, S. W.
Chandler, Seth
* Channing, William E., D. D.
Clark, Amos
Clarke, Samuel
Cole, Jonathan
* Colman, Henry
Coolidge, James I. T.
Cordner, John
Crafts, Eliphalet P.
Crosby, Jaazaniah
Cunningham, Francis
Cutler, Curtis
* Damon, David, D. D.
Davis, Hasbrouck
Dewey, Orville, D. D.
Doggett, Theophilus P.
* Edes, Edward H.
Edes, Henry, D. D.
Edes, Henry F.
Ellis, George E.
Emmons, Henry
Everett, Oliver C.
Farley, Frederic A.
Field, Joseph, D. D.
* Flint, Jacob
Flint, James, D. D.
Fosdick, David
Fox, Thomas B.

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* Dead.

Frost, Barzillai
Frothingham, William
Furness, William H., D. D.
Fuller, Arthur B.
Gage, Nathaniel
Gannett, Ezra S., D. D.
Gannett, Thomas B.
Gray, Frederic T.
Greene, William B.
* Greenwood, F. W. P., D. D.
Hale, Edward E.
Hall, Edward B., D. D.
Hall, Nathaniel
Hamilton, Luther
Harrington, Joseph
Hedge, Frederic H.
Hill, Alonzo
Hill, Thomas
Holland, Frederic W.
Hosmer, George W.
* Howe, Moses
Huntington, Frederic D.
Huntoon, Benjamin
Ingersoll, George G., D. D.
Johnson, Rufus A.
Judd, Sylvester
Kendall, James, D. D.
Knapp, Frederic N.
Lambert, Henry
Lamson, Alvan, D. D.
Lathrop, Thomas S.
Leonard, Levi W., D. D.
Lincoln, Calvin
* Little, Robert
Livermore, Abiel A.
Livermore, Leonard J
Loring, Bailey
Lothrop, Samuel K.
Lunt, William P.
May, Samuel, Jr.
Merrick, John M.
Miles, Henry A.
Moore, Josiah
Morse, William
Motte, Mellish I.
Muzzey, Artemas B.
Newell, William
Nichols, Ichabod, D. D.
Nightingale, Crawford
Noyes, George R., D. D.
Nute, Ephraim
Osgood, Joseph
Osgood, Peter
Osgood, Samuel
Palfrey, Cazneau
Palfrey, John G., D. D.
* Parker, Nathan, D. D.
Parker, Theodore
Parkman, Francis, D. D.
Parkman, John
* Peabody, Oliver W. B.
* Peabody, William B. O., D. D.
Peabody, Ephraim, D. D.
* Phipps, Harrison G. O.
Phipps, J. H.
Pierpont, John
Pike, Richard
Putnam, George, D. D.
Reynolds, Grindall
Richardson, James, Jr.
Richardson, Joseph
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Ripley, George
* Ripley, Samuel
Robbins, Chandler
Robbins, Samuel D.

Robinson, Charles
* Rogers, Timothy F.
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Sargent, John T.
Sears, Edmund H.
Sewall, Charles C.
Sewall, Edmund Q.
Shackford, Charles C.
Simmons, George F.
Smith, Amos
Smith, Joseph C.
Stearns, Oliver
Stebbins, Rufus P.
Stetson, Caleb
Stevens, Daniel W.
Stone, Edwin M.
* Storer, John P. B.
Sullivan, Thomas R.
Sweet, John D.
* Swett, William G.
Thayer, Christopher T.
* Thayer, Nathaniel, D. D.
* Thomas, Moses G.
Thompson, James, D. D.
Thompson, James W., D. D.
Waite, Josiah K.
Walker, James, D. D.
* Ware, Henry, Jr., D. D.
Ware, William
Waterston, R. C.
Weiss, John
Wellington, Charles
* Wells, George W.
Wheeler, A. D.
White, John
White, William H.
* Whitman, Bernard
* Whitman, Jason
Whitman, Nathaniel
Whitney, Frederic A.
Whitwell, William A.
Williams, George A.
Willis, Martin W.
Willson, Edmund B.
* Withington, Hiram
Woodbury, Asa
Young, Alexander, D. D.
Young, Joshua

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Abbot, Ezra
Abbot, Harris
Abbot, Samuel
Abbott, Miss Abigail
Adams, Benjamin T.
Adams, James, Jr.
Adams, Philip
Adams, Zabdiel B.
Alger, Cyrus
Alger, Francis
Allen, G. M.
Ames, David W.
Ames, Mrs. David
Ames, Seth
Andrews, Ebenezer T.
Andrews, W. T.

Anthony, Edward
Appleton, Charles T.
Appleton, Francis
Appleton, J. R.
Appleton, Nathan
Appleton, Samuel
Aspinwall, Samuel
Atherton, Charles H.
Baker, Henry F.
Ball, S. S.
Bancroft, Mrs. B. D.
Bangs, Isaiah
Bangs, G. P.
Barker, Joseph A.
Barnes, D. W.
Barnes, S. H.
Barnes, Miss Harriet
Barrett, Nathaniel A.
Bigelow, Alanson
Bigelow, John
* Bird, John H.
Bixby, Miss Keziah
Black, John
* Blake, Mrs. Sarah
Blanchard, Hezekiah
Blanchard, Joshua P.
Bliss, Theodore
* Bond, George
Bond, George W.
Boutelle, Mrs. D. W.
* Bowditch, Nathaniel
Bowen, Tully D.
Bowles, Samuel
Boyd, Francis
Brackett, Samuel E.
Bradford, C. T.
* Bradlee, Joseph P.
Brewster, Oliver
Brewster, William
* Brooks, Peter C.
Brown, Mrs. Amy T.
Burgess, Mrs. A. E. P.
Carew, Joseph
Cartwright, Charles W.
Channing, Mrs. W. E.
Chapin, Harvey
Chapman, Edmund A.
Chapman, Mrs. Jonathan
Chapman, Mrs. Margaret
Child, Mrs. John
* Child, Richards
Child, Mrs. Richards
Clapp, Miss Catharine
* Clapp, Joshua
Clapp, Mrs. Mary
Clarke, Mrs. Sarah
Cobb, Elijah
Coffin, George W.
Colton, George
Cooke, Mrs. Mary F.
* Coolidge, Joseph
* Cotton, John
Cotton, Joseph, Jr.
Crocker, George A.
Crocker, James H
Crosby, William
Cushing, T. P.
Cushman, Henry W.
Dale, Samuel H.
Dana, Dexter
Danforth, Isaac
Dascomb, Thomas R.
Davis, Charles S.
Davis, James
Davis, James, Jr.
Davis, Joseph

Davis, J. Amory
Davis, Mrs. M. M.
Denny, Daniel
Dix, Miss D.
Dorr, John
* Dorr, Samuel
Draper, James
Dwight, George
Dwight, Mrs. George
Dwight, Jonathan
Dwight, Mrs. Mary
Dwight, William
Eager, William
Edwards, Elisha
* Ellis, David
Ellis, Jonathan, Jr.
Emerson, George B.
Emmons, John L.
Everett, Miss Eliza G.
* Everett, Moses
* Everett, Otis
Fairbanks, Henry P.
Fairbanks, Stephen
Farley, Mrs. Frederic A.
Fearing, Albert
Fisher, Joshua
* Fitch, Jeremiah
Foot, Homer
Foot, Mrs. Homer
Foster, Charles A.
Foster, Charles W.
Fowle, C. S.
Fowler, James
Francis, Ebenezer
Frost, George
Gardner, John
Gardner, John L.
Gassett, Henry
Gilbert, B. R.
Gould, Benjamin A.
Gould, Mrs. Elizabeth
Gould, Lewis
Grant, Moses
* Gray, Harrison
Gray, John C.
Greele, Samuel
* Green, Ezra
Greene, Sarah
* Hall, Mrs. Edward B.
Hall, Jacob
Hall, Sarah B.
Hallett, George W.
Hammond, Daniel
* Hammond, Samuel
Hawes, Prince
Heath, Charles
* Hedge, Barnabas
Hendee, Charles J.
Hewes, Abraham, Jr.
Hewett, H. N.
Hickling, Charles
Hoar, Samuel
Hodges, George
Holbrook, Ann B.
Holland, Mrs. F. W.
Holmes, Benjamin
* Howard, Abraham
Howard, Charles
Howard, John
Howe, Gilbert H.
Howe, John
Howe, Zadock
Hull, Henry
Hunt, Nathaniel P.
Inches, Henderson
Inches, Miss

Jackson, Charles
Jackson, Francis
Jarvis, Mrs. Leonard
Jernegan, Mrs. Mary
Johnson, James
Johnson, Mrs. J.
* Johnson, Milton
Jones, Miss Charlotte
Jones, Mrs. J. C.
Judd, Mrs. Sylvester
Kendall, Henry L.
King, Daniel P.
* King, Gedney
King, Samuel B.
Knight, William H.
Knight, Mrs. W. H.
Kuhn, George H.
Lamson, Benjamin
Lamson, Mrs. F. T.
Lamson, John
Lane, George
Lawrence, Abbott
Lawrence, Amos
* Lawrence, Luther
* Lawrence, William
Lewis, S. S.
Lewis, Mrs. S. S.
Lincoln, M. S.
Lincoln, Oliver
Little, J. L.
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Livermore, George
Livermore, Isaac
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Lombard, William
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Lord, Ivory
Lord, Mrs. Sarah C.
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* Loring, J.
* Loring, William I.
Low, A. A.
Low, Francis
Low, John J.
Low, Mrs. Rachel
Lowell, John A.
Manley, Mrs. Abigail
Manley, John R.
Manley, Miss Mary
Manning, Mrs. Elizabeth
Manning, F. C.
* Marsh, Ephraim
Mason, Earl P.
* May, Joseph
May, Samuel
Mellen, Michael
* Metcalf, E. W.
Merrill, George
Miles, Mrs. Henry A.
Morgan, Charles W.
Morton, Ichabod
* Munson, Israel
Newell, J. R.
Newman, Henry
Newman, Miss Margaret
Newman, Miss Mary
* Nichols, Charles C.
Nichols, Miss C. K.
Olmsted, Charles H.
Orne, William W.
Osborn, Kendall
Osgood, Isaac
* Otis, Harrison G.
Owen, John
Parker, Daniel P.
* Parkman, George

* Parkman, Mrs. Sarah
* Parsons, Thomas
* Parsons, William
Paine, Daniel
* Peabody, Joseph
* Peabody, Mrs. W. B. O.
* Peele, Willard
Perkins, Francis
Perkins, Thomas H.
Pettes, Henry
Phelps, Mrs. Abel
* Phillips, Mrs. John
Phillips, Jonathan
Phillips, Stephen C.
* Pickman, Dudley L.
* Pickman, Benjamin T.
Pierce, John B.
Pierce, S.
Piper, Solomon
Pray, Lewis G.
Preble, William P.
Prentiss, John
Prescott, Oliver
* Prescott, William
Putnam, Mrs. George
Putnam, Philemon
Quincy, Josiah
Quincy, Josiah, Jr.
Rantoul, Robert
Read, James
Rhoades, Stephen
Rhodes, James T.
Rice, Henry
Richardson, James B.
Roberts, Amos M.
Rogers, John
Rogers, John B.
Rogers, John G.
Rogers, Mrs. J. H.
Russell, Nathaniel
Ruthven, Miss Marian
Sabine, F. M.
Salisbury, Samuel
Saunders, Mrs. Elizabeth
Savage, James
Sawyer, Samuel, 2d
Seaver, Benjamin
* Seaver, Charles
Seaver, George
Sewall, Mrs. Amy P.
Sewall, Daniel
Shaw, Francis G.
Shaw, Lemuel
Shaw, Robert G.
Shaw, W. C.
Shove, Jonathan
Smith, Mrs. Amos
Smith, Mrs. D.
Smith, Joseph M.
Smith, Melancthon
Southwick, Philip R.
Spooner, W. B.
Spooner, Mrs. W. B.
Sprague, Noah P.
* Stanton, Francis
Stearns, Henry
Stebbins, Festus
Stephens, Nathan
St. John, Samuel
* Stone, Lowell M.
* Story, Joseph
* Sullivan, William
Sweetser, Samuel
Swett, Samuel
Thayer, Mrs. Christopher T.
Thayer, Joseph H.

Thompson, J. M.
Thompson, Mrs. J. M.
* Thomson, John
Townsend, Henry B.
* Tucker, Richard D.
Tuckerman, Gustavus
Tufts, Mrs. Nathan
Wade, Eben
Wales, Samuel, Jr.
Wales, Thomas B.
Walker, Mrs. L. L.
* Ward, Artemas
Ward, Nahum
Ware, Addison
Ware, John
Warren, J. A.
Warren, George W.
Warren, Mrs. G. W.
Waterston, Robert
Waterston, Mrs. Robert
Waterston, Mrs. R. C.
Wayne, James M.
Weld, Daniel
Weld, John D.
* Weld, Mrs. Martha
Weld, Mrs. Lucia
West, Nathaniel
Wheeler, L. S.
Wheeler, Jonathan
White, Charles
White, Daniel A.
Whitmarsh, Samuel
Whitney, R. D.
Whitney, Jonathan
Whittemore, George
Wilkinson, Simon
Willard, D. W.
Willard, Mrs. D. W.
Willard, Miss Polly
Williams, David W.
Williams, George F.
Williams, Isaac
* Williams, John D.
Williams, J. D. W.
Williams, Moses
Willis, William
Wilde, S. S.
Wood, Mrs. J. V.
Worthington, William

N. B. Of the whole five hundred and fifty-four Life members, fifty-five have been added the present year.

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